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**Review of: Case George, Calling Dr. Strangelove. The Anatomy and  
Influence of the Kubrick Masterpiece**

Spiegel, Simon

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### Submissions

The *SFRA Review* encourages submissions of reviews, review essays that cover several related texts, interviews, and feature articles. Submission guidelines are available at <http://www.sfra.org/> or by inquiry to the appropriate editor. All submitters must be current SFRA members. Contact the Editors for other submissions or for correspondence.

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# SFRA Review

A publication of the Science Fiction Research Association

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## **SFRA 2016 @ Liverpool**

Chris Pak

SFRA 2016 was a marvellous success. Over a hundred attendees arrived to Liverpool for three days of engaging and insightful presentations, roundtable discussions and collegial conversation

I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who helped to make SFRA 2016 such a great success. First, let me thank our keynote speakers Joan Haran, Andrew Milner and Andy Sawyer for their keynote talks, their enthusiastic commentary and questions, and for their excellent company over the three days. Thank you to Sawyer, too, for curating an exhibition that showcased some of the material from the Science Fiction Foundation collection and for taking delegates on tours of the archive. I want to extend my thanks to Vice-Chancellor Janet Beer, who opened the conference with her welcome address, and to David Seed.

SFRA 2016 would not have been possible without the support of my co-organiser, Will Slocombe, whose help putting the event together made the whole process as smooth and enjoyable as it was. Thank you to the CRSF team - Molly Cobb, Glyn Morgan and Leimar Garcia-Siino - for their assistance and help with organising the evening socials, and to The University of Liverpool postgraduates Asami Nakamura, Beáta Gubacsi and Tom Kewin for their assistance throughout the days. Liverpool University Press sponsored a much appreciated wine reception on the second day of the conference and set up a book stall alongside Peter Lang and Liverpool's Blackwells. Thanks, too, to the support staff who helped with the logistics for the event, and to Europa International, whose timely assistance with supplying display cabinets for the exhibition helped avert disaster. Thank you to The Bluecoat Arts Centre, who hosted a wonderful banquet and treated our banqueters - myself included - to an eye-opening history of the locale.

Of course, I would also like to thank all our delegates for making the three days such a success, and the SFRA executive committee for their trust and support. It was an absolute delight to meet many of

our members for the first time and to renew friendships and acquaintances with those of you who I see all too infrequently. Thank you all!

In this issue of the *SFRA Review*, we present the award speeches that were delivered at the SFRA 2016 award ceremony. Congratulations to all of our award-winners! On a personal note, it was a particular joy to see my external examiner Mark Bould and Farah Mendlesohn receive awards this year, and to hear Bould's touching speech in person. We also present the statements for our candidates for the upcoming SFRA elections, votes for which will be cast in late September.

In addition to all of the above, we have a Feature Interview that I conducted with Paolo Bacigalupi at Liverpool Waterstones One and a Feature 101 article, 'Simulation Scenarios in the *Star Trek* Universe Reject Solipsism,' from our regular contributor Victor Grech. Grech and Mariella Scerri also contribute a conference report that discusses the second *Star Trek* Symposium held in Malta. All this and our regular run of non-fiction reviews and announcements, although for this issue we have few fiction reviews and no media reviews. I would encourage you all to write for the *SFRA Review* to help us address these lacunae in future issues.

Finally, for those of you who would like to browse the Twitter conversations and photos that emerged from the SFRA 2016 conference, I have collected the tweets in a Storify thread that can be viewed [here](#). Thank you everyone who contributed to that thread, and again thank you to everyone who helped to make SFRA 2016 such a memorable event!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**Stay Tuned**

Craig Jacobsen

SFRA 2016 is behind us now, and nothing that I could write here would properly express my appreciation to all of our hosts at the University of Liverpool. Chris Pak and Will Slocombe organized a conference for us all to enjoy and be proud of, and all of their Liverpool colleagues (who I won't try to name because I will certainly embarrass myself by missing some of them) gave selflessly of their time to make sure those of us from other parts felt welcomed. I hope that everyone involved takes away with them memories even half as good as my own.

With this issue of *SFRA Review* we turn our thoughts toward the future of the SFRA and elections of the next Executive Committee officers. Before we do that, I want to publicly thank Paweł Frelik, who will be moving out of the Immediate Past President chair after four years of service on the EC. Paweł's knowledge and insight has been of particular value to me as President, but his vision has helped to keep SFRA relevant and forward-looking. Steve Berman has served valiantly as our Treasurer, a position that folks in our field often run and hide from. Without his guidance, the loss of the old SFRA website last December might have been disastrous rather than just really bad. Susan George has served the SFRA for so long and in so many ways that this latest stint as Secretary is just another notch on her blaster. I won't thank Keren Omry yet, because she may simply be sliding over a chair (see election information in this issue), but I will say that I've come to trust her implicitly for her good sense and keen eye for opportunity.

The SFRA is just picking up steam. The new website allows us the possibility to easily host and promote the efforts of what I think of as "micro-organizations," those important but small-scale efforts of our members to push the boundaries of science fiction scholarships—the one-time film festivals, the small-press publications, the one-off unaffiliated conferences. We can fulfill the SFRA's mission by providing such endeavors with space on our website, promotion on our event calendar and social media outlets,

and locations for organization and collaboration on the discussion boards for members. If you've just thought to yourself "Hey, I run one of those things!" and you'd like to help us explore how to make this idea a reality, you should start drafting your email to me right now.

This, and other new initiatives will be coming your way from this, and the next, EC, so stay tuned and be ready to join in.

VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**"Slouching Towards Bethlehem"**

Keren Omry

AS I SIT HERE reflecting on how best to begin this column, I confess that my attention strays to the headlines running across the bottom of my screen. Since writing the last column, the world that we know seems to be unravelling. The United Kingdom has voted to withdraw from the EU; violent attacks are wreaking havoc on an almost daily basis across Europe; over 15,000 academics in Turkish universities have been arrested and/or suspended; and racial violence, race resistance, and racial discourse of the kind assumed anachronistic are making headlines every day in the US. This is a history for which we might have hoped there be a cleverly wrought alternative or that a happy twist yet awaits.

In more local – and much happier – news, the annual SFRA conference, this time at the University of Liverpool, has been and gone. Last minute obstacles ended up preventing my attendance but if the reports are anything to go by it was as stimulating, as collegial, and as rich an event as promised. Thanks to all those Facebook post-ers and Twitter tweet-ers who kept the rest of us in the loop.

I would like to take this opportunity to announce that the SFRA Survey has been published!

You can find it [here](#) or go the SFRA website, login, and click on the Survey tab. The Association has undergone a number of changes over the years and it is our top priority to make sure it best serves its members. Completing the survey is your way of telling us what you think.

As I continue to scan the news for inspiration, my attention is caught by an article on the late Ro-

salind Franklin. The chemist and crystallographer whose research proved pivotal in the discovery of the structure of DNA but who died before earning widespread recognition, would have been 96 yesterday. I have also just discovered that the marvelous C. J. Cherryh is the 2016 Damian Knight Memorial Grand Master. Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman and Brie Larson as Carol Danvers/Captain Marvel head an emerging cadre of female-led superhero films; Theresa May is the newly appointed British PM and Hilary Clinton finally confirmed as a viable US presidential candidate. While I have little patience for the sort of feminism that declares the world would have been a better, nay – peaceful, place if women were in charge (one has only to read Gilman, Piercy, Russ, et al to know that doesn't always end as planned), one does begin to think about our alternatives.

The choices we make as teachers, writers, citizens can change the world. We are well-versed in alternatives and in apocalypse and I think we could do worse than practice critical speculation and reflective fiction as I can't help but wonder what 'rough beast slouches toward Bethlehem'.

#### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## **Candidates for the 2017-2019 SFRA Executive Committee**

Paweł Frelik

BELOW, PLEASE FIND the statements from the candidates for SFRA officers. Please read and consider them and, when we open our online voting page in late September, cast your vote.

First of all, I would like to offer my appreciation to the candidates for their willingness to run for office. Like all volunteer organizations, we depend entirely on our members' efforts. While being an SFRA officer may look glamorous on paper, it is also a commitment of time and attention in the service of others. We should always remember this and acknowledge their participation.

As you may remember, last year SFRA voted to extend the terms of all officers to three years, which the current Executive Committee thinks is going to serve the organization much better in terms of continuity and organizational memory. Luckily, this does

not necessarily entail far more work for the officers – our new online system provides much better support for member management.

Last but not least, you may notice that we only have one Presidential candidate this year. A number of people we invited to run for the office are, unfortunately, tied up in other projects and cannot commit at this point in time. We also sent out an open call for candidates to the SFRA listserv but received no response. Outside general business, a major reason for this seeming shortage may be the generational change – many of our experienced members have already served on the EC while the fast-growing graduate cohort haven't been with us long enough to carry out the duties associated with the position. We trust that in three years the roster will be complete, but, for now, we have decided to work with what we have – having a dummy stand-in candidate did not seem a fair move to us.

## **Presidential Candidates**

### **Keren Omry**

BEING NOMINATED FOR the position of President of the SFRA presents both an honor and a challenge – an honor I am grateful for and a challenge which I relish. As my role as the SFRA Vice President comes to an end I feel as though I have only just begun and I am eager to propel the momentum ever onwards.

I review with a measure of pride my accomplishments over the past two years, in my capacity as an SFRA officer. These include initiating, formulating, and awarding the first Support a New Scholar grant and overseeing the distribution of the ongoing Survey for which I will be collecting and analyzing its results over the coming weeks. Furthermore, together with the executive committee, we have completely revamped the website platform which opens numerous avenues for further streamlining the Association's functions; and we have made significant headway in systematizing the back end for numerous functions of the Association, such as award committees, EC duties, and conference formats. Although these improvements may not be immediately tangible to SFRA members, their effects will inevitably be felt across the board. As the VP, it has been my duty to mediate between different SF associations and our own, to navigate between the different me-



dia and thus enhance our digital and global presence, and to take advantage of my own position as an international scholar in order to extend the reach of the Association's membership. I am only partially satisfied with my success in these endeavors and, if I am elected, I am committed to using my term as President to vigorously strive for even stronger results.

Indeed, this would be a commitment: with the newly minted policy, the position of President now requires a six-year engagement (three as acting President and an additional three as the Immediate Past President), an engagement I would enter in with confidence and pleasure. In my conversations with the outgoing EC we articulated a vision of the SFRA as a veritable hub: a hub of information, of association and collaboration, and a platform for ongoing conversations of the kind we have only really begun to have on the listserv or on Facebook.

I am an Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Haifa, Israel, and have been a member of the SFRA since 2010. I have served on the Pioneer Awards committee for three years (twice as a member, once as the chair) and am now on the Pilgrim Awards committee. I am an active member of the SF community in Israel, writing, giving talks, and teaching courses on speculative fiction, in both popular and academic circles. Finally, over the years, I have come to rely on the SFRA as an invaluable intellectual as well as a social resource. Some of my warmest professional and personal contacts have emerged from the Association and I am deeply committed to its growth and to its success. As a presidential nominee to the Association, I am filled with hope and determination, and I am sincerely grateful for your considering my candidacy.

## Vice-Presidential Candidates

### Gerry Canavan

IT'S AN HONOR to stand for election for a leadership post in the SFRA. I have sincerely enjoyed my participation in this organization from attending my first SFRA in graduate school to attending the Liverpool conference last month, and look forward to many future conversations and collaborations with the membership; both SFRA and ICFA have become very important intellectual homes for me and I'm happy

to have the chance to give something back now.

I believe the coming years offer a vital opportunity for SFRA to massively increase its profile in the contemporary academy: not only is the world becoming ever more science fictional (in ways that are both exhilarating and terrifying) but the old biases and prejudices against SF and related transmedia forms has begun to strongly fall away in favor of renewed interest with regard to both scholarship and teaching/enrollment-generation. Without being unduly territorial or proprietary, I think the excellent work we have done and are doing in SF scholarship should be at the center of these new and renewed conversations. I therefore see the main task of the VP in the coming years to work to enthusiastically promote SFRA members' scholarship in a variety of digital locations, especially Facebook, Tumblr, and Twitter, as well as draw the attention of new scholars interested in SF to the organization's annual meeting and publications. I believe the upcoming SFRA meeting in June 2017 offers an especially ripe occasion to expand the reach of our conference and bring more interesting scholars into our fold.

In addition to my work as an editor on recent edited collections and on the journals *Extrapolation* and *Science Fiction Film and Television*, I have served on the Pioneer award committee for the last three years and will serve as its chair this year; this task requires committee members to read widely in current scholarship and has, I hope, given me a firm ground for supporting and promoting the work of this organization and its current members, as well as for recruiting new ones.

I appreciate the opportunity to run for Vice President and thank you for considering me for this important post. I'm very happy to field any questions or comments you have either by email ([gerry.canavan@marquette.edu](mailto:gerry.canavan@marquette.edu)), on Facebook, or on Twitter ([@gerrycanavan](https://twitter.com/gerrycanavan)).

### Graham J. Murphy

First, I am humbled, honoured, and excited by this invitation to run for Vice-President of the Science Fiction Research Association (SFRA). I have been an active member of the SFRA for over a decade; in fact, my first professional conference was SFRA 2003 in Guelph, Ontario (Canada) and that conference truly set the bar for my own conference expectations. I was (awe)struck by the calibre of papers, the lively

discussions, and the overall collaboration and sharing of ideas at this conference. It is this level of professionalism and collegiality that continues to define the SFRA and that I would strive to embody if elected to this position.

I am a former Board member of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts (IAFA; 2007-2010), a position that afforded me the opportunity to work behind-the-scenes of an international organization and help assemble and coordinate annual conferences that appealed to not only full- and part-time academics, but independent scholars, graduate students, and writers and artists alike. These skills are certainly transferable to the SFRA and valuable in this competitive academic climate. After all, we're in fierce competition with other organizations that offer comparable conferences. This may have been less of a problem in the past, but conference funding and travel budgets for both part-time and full-time faculty are drying up; at the same time, graduate students continue to chase funding options so they can attend any number of conferences that will professionalize their academic portfolios. Given these circumstances, my most immediate goal is to draw on my IAFA experience and work with the SFRA's organizational leaders and membership to build on the calibre of past conferences and expand the conference's visibility. In other words, the SFRA Annual Conference deserves to remain a "must attend," a mandatory conference for anyone working within the organization's fields of study, and my immediate goal is ensure our conferences don't lose traction in the face of stiff competition. This commitment can take many forms, including securing exciting new venues for the conference, continuing to invite exceptional writers and scholars as special guests, and planning more conference panels that address professional matters that can appeal to junior faculty and/or graduate students alike.

In my professional career, I am a Professor with the School of English and Liberal Studies at Seneca College (Toronto) where I teach such courses as Science Fiction, Utopia Fictions, and Young Adult Dystopias in both diploma-level and degree-level streams. These are variations of courses that I taught during my decade (2002-2012) with the Cultural Studies Department and the Department of English Literature at Trent University (Peterborough; Oshawa). I also have a healthy publication portfolio, including articles in top journals (e.g., *Extrapolation*, *Founda-*

*tion*, *Science Fiction Studies*, *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature*, and *ImageText: Interdisciplinary Comics Studies*) and anthologies (e.g., *Routledge Companion to Science Fiction*, *Fifty Key Figures in Science Fiction*, and *Science Fiction and Computing: Essays on Interlinked Domains*). My editing experience includes *Beyond Cyberpunk: New Critical Perspectives* (with Sherryl Vint) and my role as one of the Associate Editors for *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*. I was also the 2005 Chair of the Philip K. Dick Award. My publication record clearly demonstrates I can work independently but also in collaboration with others, in leadership roles as well as team environments, and these are invaluable traits for a Vice-President position.

In sum, I believe my experience, my academic track record, and my overall accomplishments have well-prepared me for the challenges associated with the position of Vice-President. I thank you in advance for considering my candidacy and look forward to this opportunity.

## Secretarial Candidates

### Jenni G. Halpin

I COME TO YOU AGAIN as a candidate for secretary of the SFRA, still delighted by the collegiality at the heart of the SFRA. I would be honored to return to this office and again contribute in a more substantive way to the SFRA's ongoing support of science fiction research. My previous term in the office confirms my sense that the role provides a nearly unique opportunity to think in "big-picture" terms about the association and its work, in the stepping between the minutiae of minute-taking and the horizon in view of a summative report. I see the secretarial role as one of facilitation, with a fairly limited scope to the formal assignment leaving room for lending another shoulder to the various objects the SFRA gets into motion. Punctual, organized, and attentive to details, I would consider myself privileged to involve myself again in tracking and shaping the ongoing work of the SFRA.

### Stefan 'Steve' Rabitsch

*DARMOK AND JALAD AT TANAGRA*. What is a secretary if not a communicator—a communicator who

facilitates efficient and sustainable exchange of information, ideas, and contacts? As a cultural studies scholar and intercultural communicator, I was very pleased and humbled by the nomination for SFRA secretary that was submitted by Craig Jacobson and Paweł Frelik. For those of you who do not know me—the guy who gives papers wearing a T-shirt that reads “Academic Trekkie”—allow me to briefly introduce myself, my credentials, and the goals I would like to pursue should I be voted into office.

At the moment, I am a post-doctoral researcher and lecturer in American Studies at Alpen-Adria-Universität Klagenfurt (AAU), Austria. I joined the SFRA at my very first conference as a PhD candidate in Arizona in 2010, and it opened the frontiers of sf studies for me. Ever since then I have endeavored to attend every SFRA conference in order to continue engaging in sf academic discussions. Quite a few things have changed since then in that I have been fortunate that sf (across media) has become the main dimension of my research and also my teaching. For example, in the last summer term I taught an introductory class to literary studies by focusing on sf short stories. In the fall term of 2015/16, a colleague and I co-organized a semester-long, interdisciplinary lecture series in anticipation of *Star Trek's* 50th anniversary. It featured fifteen speakers from eleven different disciplines, including our university's president, a Fulbright guest professor, and the 2013 Austrian Scientist of the Year. The series drew an average of 200 listeners each week (Lecture #1 is available on YouTube: <[https://youtu.be/fg3ll8Lr\\_50](https://youtu.be/fg3ll8Lr_50)>). For the upcoming fall term, I am co-organizing an interdisciplinary lecture series on ‘space exploration’ with contributors from JPL, the Austrian Space Forum, and the German National Aeronautics and Space Research Center (DLR). In 2014, I was voted onto the board of the Austrian Association for American Studies (AAAS).

If you elect me SFRA secretary, I will direct my efforts, in close cooperation with the executive board, towards three main goals:

1. the SFRA website recently received a few under-the-hood upgrades. I aim to fully capitalize on the wide range of content generation/management and membership management features offered by the new *Wild Apricot* platform. My goal is twofold: a) help making the SFRA website the ‘first-

stop-shop’ for anyone interested in sf studies, and b) taking the first steps towards making the website a ‘one-stop-shop’ and premiere resource for all things sf studies in the long run.

2. Based in Europe at the moment, I would like to expand on the already existing internationalization efforts of the SFRA, fostering new links as well as strengthening established ones.
3. So far, it was the SFRA that has had the greatest impact on my professional growth as an early career scholar. Consequently, as secretary, I will dedicate myself to reaching, recruiting, and getting PhD candidates and early career scholars further engaged in the field.

It would be my distinct pleasure and privilege to support the executive board in the capacity of secretary. I come to serve. *Temba. His arms wide.*

## Candidates for Treasurer

### David Higgins

THANK YOU for considering me as a candidate for the position of SFRA Treasurer. I've been a member of the Association for several years, and I'm currently finishing my term as a judge for the Pioneer Award Committee. I teach at Inver Hills College (in Minnesota) where I've just achieved tenure, and my academic work is centrally focused on science fiction. In addition to my teaching and publishing, I'm also the Speculative Fiction editor for the Los Angeles Review of Books. I've served for six years as a Division Head for the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, and I am familiar with the responsibilities involved with serving in an administrative and leadership role for a professional academic organization like the SFRA. If elected as Treasurer, I will continue to fulfill the responsibilities of this role (managing the organizations finances, paying the bills, supervising journal subscriptions, and working with the Executive Committee on fiscal efficiency) to the very best of my ability.



## Hugh O'Connell

I AM PLEASED to announce my candidacy for the position of Treasurer for the SFRA. I've been a member of the SFRA since 2012 and just completed my first year on the Student Paper Award Committee. Currently, I'm an assistant professor of English at the University of Massachusetts Boston where I primarily teach a range of science fiction courses, including introductory lecture courses, upper level special topics courses, and graduate level seminars.

Since the position of Treasurer comes with a fairly well defined set of responsibilities, I would like to use this opportunity to explain more broadly why I would like to serve the SFRA. Although my childhood held the usual obsessions with *Star Wars*, mutant comics, and intergalactic video games, I didn't become an avid sf reader until my MA. Later, during my PhD, as questions about globalization, immigration and bureaucracy became intertwined with the vexed notion of futurity in late capitalism, I found myself increasingly drawn to global sf and consequently out

of step with the prevailing trends in contemporary British and postcolonial studies, my then primary fields. I wanted to engage with sf studies more fully, but my first tenure-track position was in a traditional department where it was made clear that there was no room to teach it. At this transitional period in my career, when I had to decide what kind of work I really wanted to pursue, the SFRA was an oasis for me. It was here that I first received a positive response to the work that I was doing and where I first made lasting connections with other likeminded scholars.

While I've since moved on to a position where sf studies is heartily supported thanks to the pioneering work of Bob Crossley, the SFRA offered me a significant point of connection when I otherwise felt isolated. If it weren't for the support that the SFRA offered me at the earliest stages of my career, I would most likely be a very different academic today. If elected, I'd welcome the opportunity to give back to and support this association the best I can.

# Star Trek Symposium – Malta 2016

Mariella Scerri and Victor Grech for SciFi  
Malta

THE SECOND Star Trek Symposium held at the Faculty of ICT, University of Malta on the 15th and 16th July, has boldly gone where no man has gone before. This Symposium organized by Prof Victor Grech, Ms Mariella Scerri and Dr David Zammit commemorated the 50th anniversary from the launch of the original series of Star Trek. The two day event was most enjoyable and was opened by Prof. Joseph Caciottolo, Pro-rector of the University of Malta. A local and international faculty from the medical and allied healthcare fields, IT specialists and the Humanities contributed to the success of the symposium.

Presentations ranged from 'The Supportive Interchange Rituals in Star Trek, to 'Medical Attitudes to the End of Life in Star Trek,' to 'Gardens in Space: Green Enemies and the Liminality of Otherness' to name but few. Discussions were animated, lively and

amicable; and as always thought provoking. The plenary talk was Andrew Weber's "Star Trek in Medical Ethics Education."

The Symposium was followed by a course dinner held at L-Ghonnella Restaurant, St Julians where wine, good humour and animated discussions flowed abundantly. An art exhibition by Prof Victor Grech was also hosted. A commemorative set of 15 paintings individually numbered and signed by Victor Grech himself were exhibited at the symposium. Each piece is being sold for 75 euro, partially fundraising SciFi Malta.

A collection of papers arising from this event will be assembled and published. The same has been done for the first Star Trek Symposium held two years ago, and the first Science Fiction Symposium hosted last year. Both books are now published and can be bought from Amazon.

[Star Trek: Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Theory and Practice \(Volume 1\)](#)

[Interdisciplinary Perspectives in Science Fiction \(Volume 2\)](#)



**Treasurer's Report, 2016**

Steve Berman

AS OF JULY 17, 2016, the Science Fiction Research Association has 240 members, many of whom are from outside the United States. In 2015, the SFRA had 270 members while back in 2014 there were 263 members. Last year about 32 members signed up during and after the annual conference. If we have 32 new sign-ups between now and the end of 2016, the SFRA will have 252 members. The small drop in membership numbers may be due to the international conference and the resulting high cost of travel for many members, but I'm sure there are other factors.

A breakdown of SFRA members from around the world follows the Treasurer's Report.

Financially, the organization is strong. As of July 17, 2016, there is \$62,901.81 in the checking account; \$20, 432.09 in the savings account, and \$574.12 in the PayPal account. *Science Fiction Studies* subscription fees are paid monthly. *Extrapolation* subscription fees, however, are paid annually so about \$7,000.00 will be mailed to *Extrapolation* in December. Most optional journals are paid bi-monthly. A list of the members who have subscribed to the optional journals (at a discounted rate for SFRA members) is presented after the list of international members.

The SFRA has also received royalties on its various publications. For example, I recently received a royalty check for the *SFRA Anthology* \$1289.22 from Pearson Education publications. SFRA also received over \$10.00 in Royalties from Amazon.

**Scholar Support:** The Executive Committee of the Science Fiction Research Association would like to thank the SFRA members who voluntarily donated money to support SFRA scholars. This year, SFRA received \$407.00 in scholar support funds. These funds are used to help pay for conference travel grants awarded each year by SFRA. This money may also be used for seed money for the next year's Conference.

Australia 4	Italy 2
Austria 1	Japan 2
Belgium 2	Poland 4
Canada 14	Spain 3
China 1	Portugal 2
Denmark 1	South Africa 1
Estonia 1	Sweden 1
Finland 2	Switzerland 1
France 2	Turkey 1
Germany 3	United Kingdom 26
Greece 1	USA 160
Ireland 4	
Israel 1	<b>Total 240</b>

**Journals:** All SFRA members (Except emeritus members) receive a subscription to *Science Fiction Studies* and *Extrapolation*. The discounted fees for these journals are included in the annual membership dues. Winners of the Pilgrim Award and Past SFRA Presidents receive a free Electronic Only membership.

**Optional Journals:** Members who select an optional journal(s) will receive discounted rates. Here is the number of members who ordered optional journal(s) so far this year:

*Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction:* 28  
*Journal of Fantastic in the Arts:* 10  
*Femspec:* 8  
*Locus Magazine:* 8  
*SFFTV:* 9  
*The SFRA Review:* (An annual issue of the *SFRA Review* is published in January of the following year): 24



## Remarks for the Pilgrim Award

Craig Jacobsen (Chair), Keren Omry, John Reider

### *For lifetime contributions to SF/F Studies*

I THOUGHT THAT I might begin with a Brexit joke, but as I'm an American, I am hardly in a position to poke fun at the national politics of others. I was also afraid that you might find the joke disastrously unfunny, or even insulting, and that as a result just over half of you might decide to leave.

The Science Fiction Research Association's Pilgrim Award was created in 1970 to honor lifetime contributions to science fiction and fantasy scholarship.

This year's Pilgrim Award winner is Mark Bould.

Mark may seem too young to win the Pilgrim. After all, if he lives up to life expectancy predictions for men in the UK, he might attend another thirty-five annual SFRA conferences. The Pilgrim, however, despite the use of that word "lifetime," is not an end-of-career encomium. It is a recognition of the production of a substantial and significant body of work in sf scholarship, and by that measure this award is nothing if not timely.

I am going to rattle off a less-than-comprehensive list of Mark's contributions for those of you who may not have noticed just how productive he's been.

He has co-edited *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction* (with China Mieville), *The Routledge Concise History of Science Fiction* (with Sherryl Vint), *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction* and *Fifty Key Figures in Science Fiction* (both with Andrew Butler, Adam Roberts, and Sherryl Vint). He's written a study of *Solaris* (BFI Film Classics), a *Routledge Film Guidebook to Science Fiction*, and dozens of articles, chapters, book reviews, keynotes and presentations. He has guest edited a special edition of *Paradoxa* on *Africa SF*, and special editions of *Science Fiction Studies* on the British SF Boom and Afrofuturism. He is, along with Sherryl Vint, a founding co-editor of the journal *Science Fiction Film and Television*, and serves as an advisory editor for at least half a dozen other journals. And that's just his science fiction work. He frequently publishes and presents about

non-SF film, television and literature.

It's an impressive body of work. If you want a more comprehensive list, visit his staff profile page at the University of the West of England website and be prepared to scroll for a while.

But the Pilgrim award isn't given for a tall stack of publications, not even a very tall stack. Dr. Bould's work is impressive because of its breadth, depth, and significance. Though Mark's work swirls around a number of persistent interests (science fiction on film and television, Marxism, African and African-American SF, noir), it isn't limited to these. His work shows that he is able to write equally effectively to the relative newcomer to science fiction and to the experts, about "great" works and terrible movies.

This Pilgrim award recognizes Mark Bould's contributions to our field as editor and writer, contributions from which we all have, and will continue, to benefit.

## Pilgrim Award Acceptance Speech

Mark Bould

THANK<sup>1</sup> YOU. I'm astonished, humbled and honoured and, to be honest, a little freaked out.

Cory McAbee is currently touring a show, *Small Star Seminar*, in which he plays a singing motivational speaker who encourages us to recognise and embrace our limitations.<sup>2</sup> Occasionally, he breaks character to talk about the 'romantic sciences',<sup>3</sup> especially transdimensionality, which is concerned with the way we often slip between multiple parallel dimensions without necessarily realising it. He in-

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1 It was around this point that the recipient began to speak through choked back emotion. [Ed.]

2 All 17 songs are available at <http://corymcabee.bandcamp.com/releases>.

3 He also mentions deep astronomy, emotional mathematics and blink time, but you can invent your own romantic sciences. For example, psychogeology, which is a lot like psychogeography, but slower and, well, deeper; or mountain-nearing, which is about getting up real close to sublime objects in order to discover their mundanity, but that's probably one to talk to M John Harrison about.



troduces it by asking three simple questions. Have you ever lost something and then later found it in a place where you've already looked? Have you ever continued an argument after the other person has left? Have you ever fallen in love with a cartoon character?

Despite answering in the affirmative, I remained sceptical. Until, well, have you ever had an email from Craig Jacobsen saying you're being given the Pilgrim Award?

When that happens, you become aware of trans-dimensional slippage, and it is profoundly disorientating, and now I seem to be stuck over here in this weird place with you guys... Don't get me wrong, y'all are lovely people, and I don't mean to sound ungrateful, but as I said in my beautifully crafted reply to Craig, it was really quite gracious and elegant: 'Fuck. Are you sure?'<sup>4</sup>

There are so many people I need to thank who I've worked with, and by whom I've been influenced, guided, helped and tolerated. So many people, from Patrick Parrinder, who taught me as an undergraduate and then invited me back to do a PhD with him, and foolishly one day entrusted to my care a visiting scholar called Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr., through to Gerry Canavan, who recently joined us as an editor of *Science Fiction Film and Television*, or to Rhys Williams, then a cocky young postgrad who asked if he could borrow my name to help get funding for a symposium on M. John Harrison symposium – and then discovered large pots of money he could apply for at his university, which enabled us to do the *SF/F Now* conference, the *SF Now* issue of *Paradoxa*, the MJH collection that is currently behind schedule but we're getting there, honest...

But there are three people, for various reasons not here tonight, who I want to thank in particular – they have been absolutely central to my life and work since that first article fifteen years ago – and then later a fourth person, who is here tonight.

Kathrina Glitre, my friend and colleague in Film Studies at UWE. We've worked together for about

fifteen years; sometimes I've been her boss, sometimes she's been mine, currently we're both each others, depending on what we're doing. Our research is mostly in different fields – she wrote the single best book on classical Hollywood romantic comedy you will ever read<sup>5</sup> – but without her constancy and genuinely terrifying organisational abilities, I would not have survived the day job this long, let alone had time to research or write or edit.

China Miéville, who was my first article editor (narrowly beating my good friend Andrew M Butler to that dubious distinction), and thus the first editor to remonstrate with me over my inability to write conclusions (and thus, albeit inadvertently, the author of the most quoted passage I've ever 'written'). He's also the first person to recruit me to an editorial board, my first co-editor, my first fiction editor, my mate, my comrade, a constant inspiration, a huge political and critical influence – plus a handy source of the occasional paying gig. He is currently engaged in a nautical adventure so secret that now I've told you about it I will have to kill you.

Sherryl Vint, my main collaborator over the years, with whom I've co-written and co-edited so much. It's not all been plain sailing. For example, she led the revolt among my co-editors against the suggestion that we dedicate *Fifty Key Figures in Science Fiction* to 'all the reviewers incapable of spotting the title doesn't contain a definite article'. She may have been helping me be my better self, but as anyone who's read the reviews will agree, I'm the one vindicated by history. None of the work we've done together could I have done on my own, and that's not just about productivity. I have learned so much from her about science studies, animal studies, biopolitics – work that is genuinely reshaping our field. Mostly I think what she has learned from me is to let Mark do the proof-reading, 'cos he gets cranky about that shit. A huge piece of this award really belongs to her.

Just three people out of so many.

But realising that helped me to figure out why this award is freaking me out so much. It's not about getting old.<sup>6</sup> It's because the award is presented to an individual.

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4 At this juncture, the recipient made what was widely considered the best, and certainly the last, of the many Brexit jokes at SFRA 2016. It addressed the insensitivity of serving as dessert another Eton Mess. This joke has proven sufficiently popular to appear in a meme in everyone's FB feed. But the recipient made it first. [Ed.]

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5 *Hollywood Romantic Comedy: States of the Union, 1934–1965*. Manchester University Press, 2006.

6 The recipient is, after all, among the youngest twenty per cent of Pilgrim winners. He should know. He did the maths. Twice, just to make sure. [Ed.]

I cannot begin to calculate how many people have edited my work or written reader's reports on it or responded to it in some way, or the amount of people I've edited, reported on or responded to in some way, let alone identify them. It's even more impossible to count the work I've read or heard delivered, the conversations I've had, let alone the acts, large and small, of kindness, generosity, critique, support, care, compassion. Yet all of these things are collaborations. Whatever's been achieved in the work that has my name on it is a product of these co-operative, collective efforts, of this mutual aid.

So this award is not just for me but for all of us (and that is not the lame platitude it sounds like now I've said it aloud).

The neoliberal agenda is destroying universities and learning, turning higher education into a machine for making profit. The UK now has the most costly public universities in the world, funded through a fees system that is more expensive to the tax-payer than free education would be, and that is deliberately creating indebtedness among students, graduates and their families on an industrial – and thus profitable – scale. Academic salaries are worth roughly sixty percent of what they were back when I started, with probably 25,000 academics on zero hours contracts.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, workloads have increased to such an extent that we work on average two extra, unpaid days a week,<sup>8</sup> and there is a massive increase stress, anxiety, depression and other work-related health problems.<sup>9</sup> There are universities whose workload model assigns a mere handful of weeks for research activity, never mind that it is often impossible actually to find those weeks among increasing teaching and administrative loads; and there are managers who would respond to one of their managees receiving an accolade such as this not with congratulations but with, 'does it bring any funding with it?'

This is why this award is not for me, but for us.

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7 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/zero-hour-numbers-still-unclear-despite-year-long-study>.

8 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/ucu-report-academics-work-two-days-week-unpaid>.

9 <https://www.theguardian.com/higher-education-network/2014/mar/06/mental-health-academics-growing-problem-pressure-university>.

Not just for the people with whom I've worked directly or indirectly, one way or another, but for all of us.

For most of us, most of the time, just as the calculation of labour-power does not care about actual labourers, so the job does not care about the work – whether that work is our students or our research. But here, at moments like this, and whenever our community or parts of it gather together, the job takes the backseat. This is about the work, about our art – about the thing we build together.

And we must make that work count.

It has to matter.

In this field, we know other worlds are possible.

We also know that some worlds are more likely than others: worlds of unchecked anthropogenic climate change; worlds in which a global economic system impoverishes, immiserates and kills people in vast numbers every day; worlds in which new forms of bloody imperialism reign, and in which the right, misogyny, homophobia and racism are resurgent. Unless we work to build better worlds – in our imaginations and our art and our work, and in this our community, and in our jobs, and through our shoddy excuses for democracy, and in the streets, and by whatever means necessary.

China ends his essay in the latest issue of *Salvage* with these words:

Is it better to hope or to despair? Do you want to create better art, or do you want a better world in which to create? Are you an artist or an activist?

Yes.<sup>10</sup>

*[Pause for an even more abrupt change of direction than those which have thus far characterised this speech.]*

Finally, I want to thank Andrea Gibbons, author of the best book you will ever read on the ways in which race and segregation continue to shape the ways our cities are developed.<sup>11</sup> For her uncanny knack of picking up books I am trying to work on,

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10 <http://salvage.zone/in-print/from-choice-to-polarity-politics-of-in-and-and-art/>.

11 *Land, Privilege, Race: One Hundred Years of Struggle Against Segregation in Los Angeles*. Available from Verso in 2017.

thus relieving me of the burden of precise detail. For always being there to pointing out that once more I forgot to do a conclusion. For persuading me that this is not the place to tear off my short and claim *I am Chuck Tingle*, expecting a Spartacus-like wave of *No, I am Chuck Tingles* to sweep the room.

But mostly for reminding me that there is life outside of the job and even, sometimes, outside of the work, for making me take days off and go out and enjoy the world. And for repeatedly telling me that, as well as being astonished, humbled and honoured to receive the Pilgrim, I should also be happy about it rather than just freaked out.

Which I am.

Finally.

Sort of.

Thank you.

#### PIONEER AWARD

### Remarks for the Pioneer Award

Gerry Canavan, Siobhan Carroll, David Higgins (Chair)

IT HAS BEEN an honor this year to serve on the Pioneer Award Committee (alongside fellow jurors Gerry Canavan and Siobhan Carroll). Judging this award has given me a special opportunity to not only read the breadth of peer-reviewed article-length scholarship published in the field of science fiction studies (broadly conceived), but also to engage in rich and meaningful conversation with my colleagues about what it means to do groundbreaking work in our field.

What counts as groundbreaking will surely be different for many of us, but my view (which is shared by this year's committee) is that admirable, award-worthy scholarship makes a cutting edge intervention in the conversations that occupy our critical attention: Great scholarship, in other words, changes the game by offering new methodologies and new perspectives that move our larger critical conversations forward in a meaningful and noteworthy way.

This year's Pioneer Award winner offers a striking example of such scholarship. Many contemporary scholars – including Rob Nixon, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Wai Chee Dimnock, Timothy Morton, and Mark Mc-

Gurl – have recently been exploring the representational challenges posed by phenomena and processes (such as climate change) that occur at sizes and scales that are radically alien to human perceptual frames of reference. McGurl, in particular, suggests that literature can function as a kind of “scaling device” which enables readers to apprehend strange phenomena otherwise inaccessible to human perceptions.

Scott Selisker, the winner of this year's Pioneer Award, builds upon this work in his essay “Stutter-Stop Flash-Bulb Strange: GMOs and the Aesthetics of Scale in Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*,” published in the November 2015 issue of *Science Fiction Studies*. Selisker argues that science fiction has a particular capacity to make weird and seemingly remote phenomena aesthetically accessible to our senses: SF makes it possible to see and feel things that occur at scales and temporalities outside normal perception in a way that can catalyze a new sense of immediacy and political agency.

Selisker's analysis demonstrates how *The Windup Girl* makes sensible the ecological, cultural, environmental, and economic impact of genetically modified organisms – an impact that otherwise occurs microscopically (beneath the range of human vision) and modifies evolutionary processes emerging from deep time (outside the range of individual human temporality). From a casual human perspective, GMOs often look tasty -- the juicier the apple looks, the more I am drawn to eat it. That's worth thinking about, because it means that aesthetics *move* us. Selisker draws on Bacigalupi to reveal how science fiction can remediate our aesthetic sense of how genetic modification looks and tastes, especially from frames of reference outside typical human experiences of size and scale.

Why is this important? Why does this matter? In one of his characteristically clever Facebook posts, Gerry Canavan has recently said that “all criticism today collapses into one of two choices: the call to conversation and the injunction to stop talking.” We need criticism that does both of these things, and we also need work that goes further and innovates pathways toward new modes of action and praxis. During his SFRA conference keynote speech, Andrew Millner asked us how art in an era of global warming can have the kind of wide reaching impact that Nevil Shute's novel *On The Beach* had for a historical moment dominated by concerns related to

nuclear proliferation. Timothy Morton has recently said that thinking about climate change is the core of the problem; if you see someone who is about to be hit by a car, that person needs your reflexes to kick in, not your thoughts. The world needs our reflexes to kick in, and Scott Selisker proposes, I think quite provocatively, that science fictional aesthetics can mobilize our feelings, and thus our actions, in ways that science fictional thinking alone cannot. I hope that he is right -- and I also hope that you will read his excellent essay and that you will join me now in congratulating him on receiving this year's SFRA Pioneer Award for excellence in scholarship.

## Pioneer Award Acceptance Speech

Scott Selisker

I was doing research for turning my dissertation into a book, and reading all the SF I could find about programmable minds. The material for the book was about how American writers, filmmakers, scientists, and political theorists since World War II have used the image of the human automaton to negotiate the differences between freedom and unfreedom, democracy and totalitarianism, and more recently between multiculturalism and fundamentalism. If I might steal the opportunity to bring it to your attention as an ideal audience, it's called *Human Programming: Brainwashing, Automats, and American Unfreedom*, and it will be published next month by the University of Minnesota Press. Doing this research, I came across Paolo Bacigalupi's *The Windup Girl*, which uses the SF trope of human programming to address the unexpected topic of GMOs.

The novel was wild and too complex to include in my manuscript, but I couldn't stop thinking about it. There followed an experience I'm sure many if not all of you have shared. I found myself trying to figure out, and hopefully even to explain, why this book seemed to fulfill the promise of SF as a genre, that is, how it seemed to do something that only science fiction could do. My provisional answer seems clearer now that article has come out: *The Windup Girl* uses an overwhelming number of SF "scaling" techniques, borrowed from many different media, in order to ask big questions about the nature of control: how are

our desires to control and even own nature (as with GMOs) both like and unlike our desires to control or own other people? The novel's techniques seemed as innovative as its questions, and I hope others here will continue to think about the problem of scale in SF, and about this terrific novel.

I'd like to close by making some acknowledgments that I missed the chance to include in the article itself. Thanks for comments from audiences at the UCSB symposium on "Mediating the Nonhuman," at the SFRA/Eaton Conference at UC Riverside in 2013, and at the University of Arizona "Convergences" series. Among those audiences, I'd particularly like to thank Rob Latham, Gerry Canavan, and Chris Cokin, for encouragement and helpful questions and comments. I can't resist a "shout-out" to the DuPont PR employee who asked many questions after my SFRA/Eaton presentation but pointedly refused to tell me his name. Since Pioneer Hi-Bred is a subsidiary of DuPont, that conversation felt like an episode straight out of the novel I was writing on. I'd like to give thanks, too, for helpful suggestions on drafts of the article from Jennifer S. Rhee, Faith Harden, and from the editorial office of *Science Fiction Studies*. At *SFS*, the article received excellent anonymous reader reports and then Joan Gordon's expert help in pushing the essay closer to organizational clarity. I'd also like to thank the SFRA for the chance to be here, and all of you here in Liverpool for an exciting, collegial, and invigorating conference over the last few days.

### CLARESON AWARD

## Remarks for the Clareson Award

Grace Dillon (Chair), DeWitt Kilgore, Rob Latham

Named in honor of the founder of the SFRA, the Thomas D. Clareson Award has been presented since 1996 for outstanding service to the field, including the teaching and study of SF, editing, reviewing, editorial writing, publishing, organizing meetings, mentoring, and leadership in major organizations. Usually the award is given for excellence in a few of these categories, but this year's winner can legitimately claim to have established a very high standard across all of them.



Farah Mendlesohn's contributions to the teaching and study of SF are extensive and significant. She has developed curricula in SF and fantasy literature and media at Middlesex University and now at Anglia Ruskin University, where she has taught since 2012. Her scholarship, including such major works as *Rhetorics of Fantasy* and *The Inter-Galactic Playground: A Critical Study of Children's and Teen's Science Fiction*, has greatly expanded our sense of the relationship between SF and fantasy, as well as the crucial importance of young-adult and children's SF to the genre. Her editorial work has been equally stellar, ranging from *The Cambridge Companion to Fantasy Literature* and *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction* to collections of essays honoring such luminaries as Terry Pratchett, Joanna Russ, Ken MacLeod, and John Clute. She has served on the editorial boards of a number of major journals and book series, including *Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction*, Glyphi's SF Storyworlds, and Liverpool's Fantastic Texts and Studies, and her reviews have appeared in *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* and *The New York Review of Science Fiction*, among many other outlets.

On top of these signal accomplishments, Farah Mendlesohn has been one of the most important figures in organizing conferences and symposia, and generally offering leadership in major organizations in the field. Her work with numerous WorldCons deserves particular praise, as she has served as one of the most important mediators between scholars and fans currently working in the academy. She was the head of the academic track at the Glasgow WorldCon in 2005, Program Director for the Montreal WorldCon in 2009, and the Director of Exhibits for LonCon3 in 2014. She has also organized numerous events devoted to specific topics and authors, including several at The University of Liverpool. She was the chair of the SF Foundation and continues to serve on its board of trustees, and was elected Vice-President and then President of the International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts, in which capacity she oversaw major changes to the running of their annual conference. Indeed, her dedicated mentoring of up-and-coming scholars, her warm encouragement of their work, has opened the field to new perspectives, making it as diverse, as inclusive, and as forward-looking at SF literature itself.

Farah Mendlesohn has, for almost twenty years, given selfless and tireless service to the field, and

it is thus a pleasure to recognize her work with the 2016 Thomas D. Clareson Award for Distinguished Service.

## Clareson Award Acceptance Speech

Farah Mendlesohn

THANK YOU for honouring me with this award. When I first heard the news I was a bit baffled. It's a service award, what have I done to serve? Then I looked at the list of activities and I thought... I get an award for doing the things I really enjoyed doing and wanted to do? Seriously? There is something wrong with that. And a bit of me does still think that.

I've been active in doing things since I was a kid. I come from an activist family. I used my first gestetner machine when I was about eight years old, although it was for the Labour party not a fanzine. It's awfully easy to recruit 8 year olds. They still think spending an hour turning a handle is exciting. I joined a choir, ended up on the committee, worked for the Labour party, went to university, joined far too many organisations, directed a play, ended up starting a newspaper (which lasted a decade) and basically did stuff that interested me. I don't think I've ever done anything I didn't want to do. And that is something I want to emphasise today: do things you enjoy doing. There are all kinds of ways to serve the community. Try everything, walk through open doors, but only do twice what you enjoyed doing the first time.

I didn't meet fandom until my twenties—you will have to ask Edward James why he never mentioned conventions to me until then—but I got involved as typist for *Foundation* (we used to type up typed manuscripts), then was recruited by well known fan and fanzine writer Alison Scott to the Committee of the Science Fiction Foundation, and eventually I ended up as chair. I've been its chair, education officer and journal editor. I've organised conventions and conferences, published books and started a masterclass. We've done most of the list of everything else I've done in the introduction so I won't go over that again.

Gary Wolfe once asked me why I did all of this and most of it comes back to the realisation when I was about 20, that although I do like performing, I had

far more fun as a stage director than I ever had acting. When you are directing the show you get to have a finger in all the pies.

We tend to think of service as something that is apart from the critical conversation, and one of the best things about the Clareson Award is that it understands that this is not the case.

For all the reviews that someone writes, the article that someone researches, the panel that they speak on; the choices you as editor, director, curator get to make shape the whole. These behind the scenes people shape the paradigm in which an activity is read and interacted with. Hopefully good, occasionally disastrous. I've sat in audiences and watched twitter feeds with pride as something I put together gets the approbation of the community. I have of course also watched as those feeds went pear shaped.

Much of the pride is in the ability to bring people together to create interesting conversations. As we are all much more aware of now I think, conversations get trapped in bubbles. Being a convention or conference organiser, a book editor or an exhibits creator means you can introduce bubbles to each other. To take one specific aspect, I've been involved in a lot of conversations in the past decade regarding how to create diversity on convention panels from the ground up. The community has done some seriously good work on this and developed a real theoretical basis (although we don't talk about it as a theory). It involves avoiding certain traps (my favourite person X really likes talking to W, Y, and Z, without noticing that you are embedding the lack of diversity in X's conversations or friendship group into your programming). It involves considering how to shape questions to direct conversation, selecting moderators as active participants of a very particular kind, looking back at where the conversation in the field is and who is new and interesting. Editing books just formalises this. One of the things I've enjoyed is being able to put people on panels for the first time, help them develop papers, give them their first publication. I've been particularly lucky in being then able to convert all this to my professional life: as some of you already know, I love being a head of department because I get to create a platform that supports my amazing staff, and allows them to excel.

But what I want to remind you most of all is that I have never done any of this alone. And I apologise because the next bit is a tad listy and you won't recognise all the names. It isn't a complete list but

it is some of the highlights: If I am a good mentor it is because I have been well mentored, by Edward James, by John Clute, by Gary Wolfe among others. If I have taught well it is because I saw brilliant teachers teach, from my mother (I used to sit at the back of her class when I was off school) through to some very special school teachers one of whom I lost this year). If I have been a good manager it is because I was taught by good managers from convention chairs such as Vince Docherty and Colin Harris, and academic Heads of Department such as Maggie Butt. If I have been a good editor and organiser it is because I've collaborated with fantastic people such as Edward James, Andrew M. Butler, and now Niall Harrison and Mike Levy. At conventions I've worked with closely Simon Bradshaw, Cheryl Morgan, David Clements, Stu Segal, Laurie Mann and others. Laurie deserves a special mention as being a brilliant sergeant major to a very terrified second Lieutenant Worldcon Programmer in 2009.

Some of these people became my closest friends as a consequence. Most recently, and who deserve a special mention, my Worldcon Exhibits team of Shana Worthen, Serena Culfeather, John Wilson, David Haddock, Phil Dyson, Edward James and most particularly Joe Raftery, who died of Hodgkins Lymphoma earlier this year and who is terribly missed.

I have been supported through all of this work by my managers, by colleagues, and in particular by students, who are far more curious about what we do than many people seem to give credit for (around ten of my ex-undergrads turned out to help with the set up at Worldcon in 2014), and especially by my PhD students who have been both support and resource in many different ways (and I don't just mean washing dishes at parties, although I am very grateful for that). Three in particular I want to thank for their support, Tiffani Angus who is here tonight, and Audrey Taylor and Meg MacDonald who are not.

As you probably know I'm working on a book about Heinlein at the moment, a man who is often understood as a believer in rugged individualism. One of the things I will be arguing is that this is a complete misunderstanding of Heinlein's world. So it is fitting I think to end with a quote.

At the end of *Starship Troopers*, Johnny Rico says, "I guess my luck has always been people".

Thank you.

## Remarks for the Mary K. Bray Award

Isiah Lavender III, Larisa Mikhaylova (Chair),  
Brittany Roberts

THE AWARD COMMITTEE was reviewing the materials printed in the issues 311-314 of the *SFRA Review*. We should remark that it is becoming more and more difficult to single out individual entries, as the general scope and originality gets better and better. So in order to choose, one has to look for a specific angle which might allow us to bestow the distinction of this award upon a particular person.

Some reviews could be called model ones for their compact outlining along with essential plotline of the interesting turns connecting the work in question with an author's previous oeuvre and possible approaches to its study – such as Bill Dynes' review of Leckie's *Ancillary Sword* (#312). While others by necessity, as they cover more ground in describing SF of a whole country or area, are more extensive, but are well structured and help readers to see the strong sides and deficiencies of critique opening up unexplored ground, such as Hugh O'Connell's review of *Paradoxa #25 Africa SF*, edited by Mark Bould (#313), or Simon Spiegel's review of Tom Moylan's classic new edition *Demand the Impossible: Science Fiction and the Utopian imagination* (#311).

Besides, there was added a vibrant media section to the *Review*, which produced its own jewels, such as Lars Schmeink's excellent review of video games "SF-Worlds and the First-Person Perspective" (#312).

Several years in a row, we are also looking at an impossible dilemma: how to compare an excellent review of a single book or an anthology to an entry in the 101 section. There is a world of wisdom, observation and useful advice in those publications. But they are definitely in two different weight categories, and that leaves all the other people who contribute a lot of their experience into reviewing a separate work at a disadvantage as to the possibility of getting the award. Our committee firmly believes there should be a special award added for 101 type of publications, an accolade to their clarity and usefulness as teaching tools.

Thus, it was not easy to bring our lists to the final three names, let alone to the final recipient of an award. So we had to agree on the angle, and that became a combination of appearance on all our lists and consistency in producing excellent work for several years in a row – that is inclusion into all the lists of the previous two years on my term in this committee. Thus the Mary Kay Bray Award for the best publication in the *SFRA Review* of 2015 goes to – Amy J. Ransom.

Her reviews of Sonya Fritzsche's first in the series *The Liverpool Companion to World Science Fiction Films* (SFRA Review #312) and a book - *Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase: Contemporary North American Dystopian Literature*, edited by Grubisic, Baxter and Lee (#313), besides being "concise, clear, well-organized, and immediately accessible", make them useful tools to scholars seeking a fair evaluation of the volume's merits. A member of the committee also noted: "I also appreciate her attention to the anthology's individual essays, ... in addition to her thorough consideration of the volume's overall strengths and weaknesses". I would add that her personal approach was always characterized by a generous tendency to include in her comparisons works in French and Spanish, thus enlarging our circle of knowledge. Amy J. Ransom's high quality contribution to science fiction research is varied, and we unanimously think she has earned the Mary Kay Bray award this year.

## Mary Kay Bray Award Acceptance Speech

Amy J. Ransom

GREETINGS SFRA FRIENDS,

I'm doubly sorry now that I couldn't attend the England conference, first so I could have gone all fangirl on Andrew Milner for championing the "Anglo-French origins of sf", and second so I could have accepted the Mary Kay Bray award in person. What an honor to receive the award after what I realize has been a decade since my first review appeared in the *SFRA Review*. I have reviews in every category (fiction, non-fiction, and media), but looking over my past history, I realize for quite a while I seemed to be the resident animated sf film reviewer. I'm sad to say that my son has now grown out of seeing mov-



ies with mom, so I'll have to find a new niche! Many thanks to the committee for recognizing my reviews of "grown up" non-fiction books, which reflect my longstanding efforts to raise the sf community's awareness off works beyond the Anglo-American canon. It's certainly more pleasurable to review such quality books, so I want to acknowledge again Sonia Fritzsche's *Liverpool Companion to World Science Fiction Films* and *Blast, Corrupt, Dismantle, Erase: Contemporary North American Dystopian Literature* edited by Bret Grubisic and Gisele Baxter. I also want to thank Dominick Grace for editing my non-fiction reviews, Chris Pak for his great work as editor, Lars Schmeink for doing the nuts and bolts work for the *Review* for several years now, Ritch Calvin for his long service as media reviews editor. I hope to work with the new fiction and media editors soon.

I am so lucky to be part of this organization and I thank its wonderful people for all of the support I've received from you over the years. See you in Riverside!

#### STUDENT PAPER AWARD

## **Remarks for the Student Paper Award**

Shawn Malley (Chair), Hugh Charles O'Connell, Taryne Taylor

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE that the Student Essay Award Committee presents this year's prize to Dagmar Van Engen, for the paper entitled "The Interspecies Erotic Sex and the Nonhuman in Octavia Butler's *Xenogenesis* Trilogy."

Chosen from a very competitive field of papers delivered at last year's conference in Stony Brook, Dagmar's submission is distinguished by its sensitive negotiation of the complex relationships between sexuality, gender and racial politics in Butler's work.

In the paper, Dagmar argues convincingly that Butler dismantles binary gender politics by offering the nonhuman as key to imagining more livable gendered and sexual worlds. The sexual dynamics in *Xenogenesis* probe, Van Engen argues, the threshold of the human patrolled by racist discourse through the SF trope of inter-species sex. The selection committee was impressed with the facility with which

Dagmar positioned in the scope of a 20-minute presentation these arguments within larger debates about racial politics, feminism, and animal studies in SF scholarship.

Please join the (absent) adjudication committee in congratulating Dagmar van Engen for this stimulating research.

## **Student Paper Award Acceptance Speech**

Dagmar Van Engen

THANK YOU SO MUCH for this recognition; I apologize for my absence in accepting this award. I am honored to learn that my presentation was chosen for the 2015 Student Paper Award, and I am grateful for the opportunity to share my work with such a generative and supportive audience, particularly in the context of last year's conference theme, "The SF We Don't (Usually) See: Suppressed Histories, Liminal Voices, Emerging Media." I learned so much from the imaginative scholarship shared last year on antiracist, queer, indigenous, feminist, and nonwestern speculative fictions. After Orlando, in the wake of so much recent violence against lives vulnerable to racism, colonialism, and toxic masculinities, the marginalized imaginations celebrated in that meeting continue to be urgent for collective survival on this planet. My presentation on the *Xenogenesis* trilogy explored how gender and sexuality are the sites on which racism polices the category of the "human," deciding who will survive and who won't. It feels even more crucial now to account for these intersecting forms of violence in SF scholarship: it was specifically queer Latino people who were targeted in the Pulse nightclub, although this was whitewashed out of American media coverage. As I am still struggling to come to terms with what happened in Orlando and how it affects my work, I'd like to leave you with Samuel Delany's words from *Babel-17*: "Imagination should be used for something other than pondering murder, don't you think?" Thank you for sharing your imaginations with me in the generative conversations that happen at SFRA, and thank you again for this award.



## An Interview with Paolo Bacigalupi

Chris Pak

PAOLO BACIGALUPI is the award-winning author of the highly acclaimed debut novel, *The Windup Girl* (2009), which won the 2010 Hugo, Nebula and Crook awards, and the 2012 Seiun award for best translated long story. He has also written three works of young adult fiction: the diptych *Ship Breaker* (2010) and *The Drowned Cities* (2011); and *The Doubt Factory* (2014), along with a work of middle-grade fiction, *Zombie Baseball Beatdown* (2013).

On March 31st 2016, I interviewed Bacigalupi at Waterstones Liverpool One for the UK release of his second adult fiction novel, *The Water Knife* (2015), a near-future sf thriller that explores the personal hardships and the political, economic and legal intrigues that arise as a consequence of populations adapting to a new norm of severe water scarcity in the Southwestern United States.

This interview has been edited for ease of reading in print.

**CP: You've mentioned in some other interviews that this book grew out of a short story, "The Tamarisk Hunter" (2006), which is in your collection *Pump Six and Other Stories* (2008). It has been about ten years since that story was published: why did you decide to write this book now?**

PB: When I wrote that short story I had been working for an environmental newspaper, *High Country News* [HCN]. I had been working as their online editor during a very early period in my career. I had actually failed as a novelist at that point. I'd written four novels and none of them had sold, and I was a complete failure. But I started writing short stories and those started to have a little bit of success. I'd been talking with an editor at HCN about this new short story that I was thinking about, which was inspired by some reporting that some of the science and environment journalists were doing at the newspaper. One of them was Mat Jenkins, who was reporting on

shortages on the Colorado River and how Las Vegas was handling those shortages politically. The other person was Michelle Nijhuis, who was reporting on very early indicators of climate change in the region, where you're seeing certain species changing their habitats, you're seeing certain forest fires and beetle movements and things like that – that were starting to indicate that maybe there was something going on that was measureable. I was trying to think of a way to write a story that connected to those concepts.

When I told the editor about it, I said "Oh I'm thinking maybe about doing something where somebody gets paid money to rip out any plant that sucks water out of the river so there's more water in the basin for the cities," for California, who has the best rights on the river. He asked, "Can you write that for the newspaper?" It was this weird experiment where I was going to try to write fiction for a non-fiction audience. The newspaper had never published any fiction at all, and yet we're going to make it a lead story and you're going to be on the front of the newspaper, essentially. So the front of the newspaper, instead of giving you the news, instead of giving you serious reportage, was going to give you a made-up science fictional story about future drought instead. So it was a really interesting experiment for me in trying to write for an audience who weren't automatically acclimatised to reading science fiction and who were also deeply informed about the issues that you were writing about. So it was a fraught experiment.

After we did it, it was really quite successful, which was interesting because it generated a lot of discussion in the newspaper. Nobody was angry and nobody cancelled their subscription, which is always nice [laughter]. After we did it I really felt like we'd covered the topic. I like that about short stories. You can hit an idea, you go in and you just – it's like a hammerblow when you do it right. People will never forget the story, they never forget some visceral moment, and you're done. You don't have to write a novel. Novels are totally extraneous. Short stories are the best form ever. They're terrible for supporting yourself, but they're great for giving ideas. They're little idea bombs. I sort of felt like I'd done the job.

For years I thought, "climate change, well, everyone knows about that, and drought." It's written about all the time. There's no territory for me to explore that somebody else won't already have touched. So after I'd written *The Windup Girl* and actually had some success as a novelist, there was this period where

I went churning around, trying to figure out, well, what do I write about? What seems important or worthwhile? If you're going to spend a few years of your life doing a book, why do you choose this topic to do it?

The trip moment for me was in 2011, when I was down in Texas during a massive drought that had been gripping that state. There were a whole bunch of things that were happening there. Farming and ranching were being devastated. They were having to put down all their cattle because the land couldn't support it. All their crops were dying. There were towns that were pumping water from aquifers; those aquifers were drying up, and so those towns were drying up as well. There were rolling brownouts in the state because some of their electricity was generated by hydroelectric power and the pumps were too low, so they didn't have enough hydraulic head to turn the turbines to generate the electricity at the exact same moment that they were having record numbers of 100 degree days. Everybody's trying to run air-conditioning, so it's like this perfect storm of demand being super-high at the same time as, suddenly, their electricity grid didn't have any capacity. You saw all of these spots where water touched people's lives and where too little of it screwed everything up. But the thing that really pushed me over the edge was at that exact same time the drought was happening, the Governor of Texas, Rick Perry, who was also a presidential candidate at the time, was going around and holding prayer circles and praying for rain.

The moment I realised I wanted to write this book was the moment where you think, "Oh look, we see something really important happening here. We have this terrible drought, and on top of that, we see this drought actually matches what climate models say future Texas will look like." So when you put on your science fictional glasses and you look at the future, this is the future, right here. You just time-travelled. Right now in this drought, you have actually entered future Texas. What does it look like? It looks really scary. What is the leadership doing? They are praying for rain. And you think, "reality free-fall here - this is not a good thing" [laughter].

That was the moment where I was like, "apparently this topic has not been covered enough. It hasn't been talked about enough," because you had this strong sense that - okay look: we know the data tells us bad things are coming, and at the same time

we decide to engage in magical thinking about how serious that is. For me that's sort of like catnip. You immediately start extrapolating and thinking, "if this goes on, what does the world look like? If this becomes a dominant trend for us, if this is how we behave and the kinds of information coming out at us is true, then what kind of world are we going to end up in?" It just felt like it needed to be written, and that was the moment I sort of locked in the story and said, "okay, I'm going back to this world. I'm going to attack it again."

Long answer to a short question, sorry. [laughs]

**CP: No, that's great: there's a lot we can pull out from there. I'm fascinated by this idea that Texas showed us the future, now, as if it's science fiction itself.**

PB: That was a really strange moment, actually, because I did think "I'm time travelling. This is not a drought. I'm time travelling. Right now." And you felt it viscerally. I think that's the other thing. In that moment, ninety percent of the time we discount whatever the future holds for us because we can't experience it viscerally. One of the things I'm most interested in about fiction is that you can help people experience things viscerally that are otherwise deeply abstract. You can build empathy for people who you've never met, from cultures you've never experienced, from situations you've never known. But in the same sense you can also build empathy for your future self, for your child's future, because you can live inside that future for a second.

In that moment in Texas suddenly I had the empathy and connection to what a genuinely scarce future would look like. "I can bring this home for people." That was part of it, too.

**CP: That does explain the Texans in the book. In the acknowledgements, one of the first groups of people that you point to are environmental journalists, and I found that really interesting. Especially because I wondered what that meant for how you conceive of writing a book, what your goals are -**

PB: How much of an agenda I have. [laughter]

**CP: More, whether you think fiction can do anything over and above reporting that reporting**

can't itself do.

PB: A lot of my friends are science and environment journalists. Actually, one of the people who I sort of built my career with – simultaneous to my moving my fiction career forward – was Michelle Nijhuis. She was starting out as a freelance science writer at around the same time that I was trying to – still trying; continuing to try – to break in as a fiction writer. We would set goals for one another. “Okay, have you submitted something to the *Magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy* yet?” “No I haven’t.” “Well why not?” And the same thing: “Have you written a proposal for *National Geographic* yet?” “No I haven’t.” “Well why not?” We would set goals and push each other to keep trying to move our careers forward.

These reporters are doing phenomenal work. They tell stories. Lucy has this experience in the book as well. They tell stories that are profoundly important. They are excavating our future. They are showing it to us. They’re showing us exactly what matters and we ignore it and we ignore it and we ignore it. One of the problems I think – and this is something that came up a lot in conversations. Someone like Michelle, as a responsible reporter, she can report what we see right now. She is not allowed, in any responsible way, to say “oh, that’s what the future holds, it will definitely go this way, here’s what it is.” I can do that, though. I can be extremely irresponsible. I can create that distorted, terrible, broken future where all the things go wrong. And that’s not reportage anymore. But it’s powerful and visceral in a way that science reporting isn’t. And this is the other problem we ran into a lot at *High Country News*. When you report reality, a lot of times people are already too depressed by it to read any more of it. If you just covered every single extinction that is going on, you could become *The Journal of Extinction* [laughs]. Pretty soon your readership would also be extinct, because they would all start unsubscribing. [laughter]

We saw this a lot at *High Country News*, where people would say, “we love what you do, it’s amazing. Here’s a donation for the paper. We’re canceling our subscription because we just can’t take being depressed anymore.” You saw that reflexive withdrawal that people have. Like the facts are actually horrifying and they have to flee from that. It’s a self-preservation thing. I do it myself. I don’t want to read too much bad news. At some point I’m like “No, I want to read *Vanity Fair*. Tell me what the stars are

doing. Something.”

The two things you can do with fiction: you can extrapolate outward far beyond where we are right now. But the other thing is you can actually suck people in with entertainment. I think there’s something really beautiful about that. To me, fiction has to function as story first, fiction has to function as entertainment first. I’ve never picked up a book thinking, “oh yes, I would like to eat my gruel today, I’m going to read this because it’s good for me.” No. I read books because they give me joy, they give me excitement, they give me some sort of visceral pleasure. To me, there’s this amazing thing though where you can have that excitement of reading something that’s a gripping story, and at the same time illuminate an entire set of concepts that otherwise we would want to shy away from or avoid or not think about. So it’s like you’re getting all your entertainment and you’re getting a new perspective on the world.

**CP: Great! The theme of water rights in *The Water Knife* complements the themes of genetically modified organisms and food scarcity in *The Windup Girl*. Did you see *The Water Knife* as a natural continuation of your other works? As filling in a gap that was there? Or did you see yourself as doing something distinctively different?**

PB: You want to think as an author that you’re doing things that are different each time, and then you find out that you’re actually repeating yourself in weird ways. You start to see your own fetishistic obsessions. One of the things that I notice a lot in my writing is the theme of who wins and who loses with any given technological intervention, with any technological solution. So with the food security question, there’s people who profit. There are people who don’t. There are people who are disenfranchised and there are people who are massively empowered by a certain technology. I’m really interested in that, and it turns out that when I play around with something like the question of water, again it’s the same: I end up looking at these same lenses of who’s the winner, who’s the loser, who’s getting disenfranchised, how does capitalism connect to those things.

I’m really interested in how capitalism always engages in the techno-fix, as opposed to a fundamental solution. So in the world of *The Windup Girl*, which is all about genetic engineering, the techno-fix is to say, “okay, we’re experiencing all these droughts. Now



we need genetic engineering to make more drought resistant plants.” Okay. Then of course the reason why we’re doing this is because, yes, it feeds people, but of course it’s profitable is why we do it. And then the question is “who can afford it?” That’s the only market we actually care about. We don’t really care about – we’re not feeding the world. We’re feeding people who can buy our food.

Similarly in *The Water Knife* there’s this moment where drought is an issue and they start building these things called arcologies. The arcologies are these really beautiful, really highly efficient, integrated urban environments, basically. So there’s living and there’s business and stuff, but there’s also vertical farms – they’re designed so that they always take their nutrients in, so any river water that gets pumped into these systems gets re-used and recycled multiple times, and nothing ever comes out again.

But these are highly engineered systems and they’re built for the people who can afford to buy in. So if you can buy your condo inside one of the arcologies up in Las Vegas or whatever, or in the Taiyang arcology down in Phoenix, you’re kind of sitting pretty. You’ve got a whole set of technological solutions. You’ve got good air filters, so of course forest fires, smoke and the dust storms outside don’t bother you. You’ve got wonderful organic food grown in your aquaponic vertical farms. You’ve got all of these things and then right outside there’s people like the Texans or other less fortunate people from Phoenix who can’t afford to get in. The solution for water scarcity if you’re poor is the clear-sac [laughter]. Which is basically a plastic bag that you can pee in, and when you squeeze it, it moves through the plastic and it’s filtered, so you can filter and re-filter your own urine. They’re very cheap, they’re very disposable, and they last several times. Because Phoenix, by the time this is happening in the story, has lost most of its municipal services, people throw their plastic bags away and these clear-sacs fly around and get caught on saguaro cacti, they get hung on billboards, so it becomes a solid waste problem as well. But this is what the poor can afford. For fifty cents you can have your own urine filtering bag that’s useful for twenty uses, and then you need to buy another.

Both of those things are essentially the same kind of idea: “Oh, water is scarce? Drought is terrible? Climate change has affected you. Here’s the profit model for the very poor” – most of the population. “Here’s

the profit model for the very rich.” That’s like none of the population. None of those techno-fixes are at all interested in “let’s just not do this global warming thing. Let’s not burn carbon.” There are very simple social fixes, which would be for you to tax carbon to the extent that we actually avert climate change. But that’s not on the table in capitalism. There’s no direct profit model built around that, just adapting again and again and again to the cascade of mistakes that we made. That’s very much within the capitalist structure, and we’re very good at it.

In *The Windup Girl* it’s the same set of dynamics where everybody’s adapting ahead. One solve leads to the next problem leads to the next problem leads to the next solve, but nothing ever goes back to the root problem. “Let’s not just go down this whole chain.” Thematically, if there’s anything that I see really strongly – “Oh, look at that. I’m at it again” – I focus on this one thing.

**CP: That failure to recognise the situation we’re in and to adapt appropriately is a major theme in the book, not just on the management, capitalist level, but also the way in which individuals cope with their change in circumstances, changes beyond their ability to effect in any way.**

PB: Yes.

**CP: I wanted to ask about this notion of infrastructure as being central to your works. With the arcologies, with water systems, and the legal and economic aspects that structure all of that. It’s as if you build the infrastructure and set the characters in it to illuminate that world. Is the characters’ traversal of that world specifically what they’re there to do?**

PB: That is specifically what they’re there to do. Ideally you as the reader don’t ever notice that’s what they’re doing [laughs], so yeah, this is very much pay no attention to the man behind the curtain while I manipulate my marionette strings on all these puppets. A lot of times, the way I think about stories is that I come at them from this sort of “high” intellectual, theoretical level first. So I want to write about climate change, I want to write about drought. Okay, how do you make this meaningful? Okay. I want to talk about people who plan and people who don’t. Okay, how do I make that meaningful? Okay, I’m go-



ing to talk about Las Vegas, a place that plans, and Phoenix, a place that doesn't, and what's that? But then within that, how do we explore that space?

The characters then are all there to – ideally your experience of them is that they are fully rounded, deeply realised people. But I choose someone like Angel as the water knife so that he can create the structure of the thriller: the guy who goes out and gives people offers on their water rights they can't refuse, the guy who blows up other people's water treatment plants, that guy is on the hunt for water rights. So this very dangerous person, this very hard-willed personality, is on the hunt for water rights. Someone like Lucy gives you this opportunity to look at the political systems from an analytic perspective because as a journalist she can interview many different people, she can drop into many different kinds of viewpoints, so whether it's talking to a water manager, whether it's talking to a cop or whoever, you know suddenly you can get many voices brought into the narrative via the journalist that you couldn't necessarily get access to otherwise.

Then you've got someone like Maria, and here's the person who's the loser in the whole system, the person who's been completely disenfranchised, first by Texas' whole failure to plan. Now she has arrived in a new city that's already struggling and that's incredibly hostile to these new displaced immigrants from Texas. So what does it look like to be a climate refugee? What does it look like to be a climate loser, basically? If you do it right, then you get empathy and connection with these many different layers of society, you get many different access points. You get to see how the really wealthy live, you get to see how the very poor live. You get to see these intellectual, wonky-kind of analysis moments, and all of that hopefully builds out the world in this rich way so it feels real.

In the beginning stages there's definitely a lot of strategic planning. It's like, "where do I need access points?" Then the trick is to actually make those people human. You know, "oh, great, intellectually I know I need a journalist, or I know I need a climate refugee. But I need to make this matter." It's a process where that part is not very controlled at all. It's not analytic. That's like you feeling your way into the story again and again and again. So that scene with Maria at the pump, I probably re-wrote ten different times. First it was just, "what does Maria do? Is this Maria waking up in the morning? Is this Maria at a

job? Oh, this is Maria trading water. How is Maria trading water? Oh, who are the gangsters she has to pay off for that water? Oh, that's a detail I can use in the novel. Oh, okay, well what's her central problem, or parts of the problem?" I also want to get access to this whole idea, you know, of who can afford water and who can't. So suddenly there's a pump, and the price changes based on how full of water the aquifer below is. And Maria is stuck there watching the pump, and watching the price, and hoping that the price will go down so that she can speculate on water and buy in at a low price. Finally you get enough details so that suddenly Maria, she's just there, and finally I will be there. That's when you have story actually, that's the moment when you start figuring out how all these people interact. You kind of believe in each of the characters and they've all been built up.

**CP: One of the reasons I'm so enthusiastic about that particular scene is because, despite all the difficulty with making the legal and economic aspects appealing to readers – because they're too abstract, or they don't understand how it actually works "in the flesh." I think you do a great job of making that character represent that system, and making us see how that system would actually work on an individual level. Was it difficult to bring the abstract and the personal into equilibrium?**

PB: One of the things is that there are all of these really weird abstract legal and political frameworks that overlay water in the Western United States. There's two things you're trying to do: one is that in order to talk about these things you have to speak about a local, specific level of impact for something like climate change. In order to make it real enough you have to be down on a highly localised level. That's where the visceral occurs. But the problem is the more localised you become, the more you alienate the outside world. I can talk about water rights and anybody who grew up in the Southwestern Colorado Valley that I grew up in knows about water rights. They know how they function, they know who has good rights and who has bad rights. They know where the water is diverted, they know who's on Farmer's Ditch versus the Fire Mountain Canal. They know a whole bunch of things about water infrastructure and that sort of closed system, a sort of coded cultural system that then you need to break

out enough to make somebody who's never felt water scarcity at all suddenly think that these things matter. Junior rights? Senior rights? Whoever heard of these things?

Similarly, what are the dynamics of geography? If you've never spent any time in the Western United States, you aren't really interested in the Upper Basin States versus the Lower Basin States. You don't even necessarily know where the Colorado River is. You don't know how big it is, you can't imagine it. There's so many of those things that you need to build out to the point that they become real. You know them in their specificity but you want them to become universalised in some way. All of that is actually complicated and it's a bit of an experiment where you actually roll the thing out, and finally you say, "I think I did this," and you sort of hold your breath and you wait. So what you're trying to do is take all those abstractions and trying to make them concrete in this specific space, and then drag it out again to make it universal.

That's what the characters can do then: if each of these characters in their moment – if Maria experiences a certain aspect of water and pricing and aquifers in Phoenix, and Angel in another moment, you can have a moment where his helicopter flies over the Colorado River and you get to see it, and you get to look at that and you can sort of get a sense of the snow falling in the Rockies that flows down through this entire system. It goes all the way to the Pacific Ocean, a thousand miles across multiple States, and talk about all of the dams that are in the way. That there's Soldier Dam, and Glen Canyon Dam, and Lake Powell and Lake Mead. You've got Lake Havasu – this chain of dams, this chain of engineering projects. Trying to find ways to describe all of these things so you get that physicality of landscape and why it matters.

You attack at many, many times, and oftentimes the problem is that while you're trying to attack it, you have to sort it out in about the first three to five chapters. Most of that has to be sorted out: you have to introduce the characters, you have to introduce some sense of some sort of stakes, you have to introduce this really alien world to most people and make it seem real. I end up spending a lot of time in the beginning parts of the book trying to find different attack points.

It's interesting what you end up discarding. Originally in the opening scene I had Angel standing at

the top of an arcology looking down through all of the cascading waterfalls in this beautiful, lush, engineered landscape. I needed that. It was a late addition to the book: I realised I needed it because there wasn't enough of a sense of what the water winners' lives might look like. I was like, "Oh, that's missing, I need to find some sort of way to introduce it." Yeah. Many iterations.

**CP: One of the other themes that's mentioned is linked to Zimbardo's real-world prison experiment. Taking the notion that our choices are defined by the infrastructure we find ourselves in, the setting, how important is that moral aspect? Choice, being able to shape our own destiny, being trapped in the infrastructures that we find ourselves in?**

PB: Okay, so this is really important to me, actually. One of the things when you're writing a novel is that it is supposed to be about something that has some big dramatic thing: climate change bad! [laughter] Which sounds terrible – would you read that book? Hell no I wouldn't read that book! [laughter].

One of the things that you find when you write with some sort of values concept in the back of your head is that you're very quickly going to end up in this place that feels extremely didactic. It feels exceedingly formulaic. You don't want to end up there. It turns out if you build the world out – and I really do believe this – then the characters simply occupy the roles that world dictates to them. Suddenly those characters are not puppets saying "I have the right values. Those bad guys have the wrong values. Let's do battle with the bad people who have bad values." It doesn't become like that. Instead you have this hugely complex world where some people are winners and some people are losers, some people have figured out some way to get ahead a little bit, some people haven't, and you just have to set them loose to live their lives inside of the structure that you've already built. Once you've defined somebody as basically having no money, you've been put on the road, chased out of or across New Mexico or whatever, been chased out of Texas, you've made it as far as Phoenix, there's border control laws that are keeping you from getting anywhere else, you have no money and your father is dead, what next? You don't need to worry anymore about saying climate change bad because, boy, Maria's experiencing it, you know?

Now you just have to root for her figuring her way through the mess that our present world is creating for her. She just has to occupy her heartfelt role: “Wow, I’m hosed here. What do I do next to survive?”

And similarly Angel, who’s the water knife, is coming from a space where he’s finally found a niche that supports him. Why are you a water knife for Catherine Case? Well, because I didn’t want to get shipped down to be stuck like Maria, you know. There’s a specific reason that makes pretty good sense. Each of those characters, as they live in their naturally dictated sort of habitat, I guess, created by that world-building that you’ve done, they become whole and real. I think this really is true: we have illusions of free will, but so much of it is dictated by the circumstances that we’re born into, the circumstances that we grow up in. The roles that we are told we occupy we tend to occupy.

It’s actually incredibly hard, and it’s fascinating what happens when you pull somebody out of one environment and drop them into another. I moved around a lot when I was a kid and so when you moved into a new school you could re-invent yourself and you could just become somebody new. I became the cool kid [laughter]. In the last town I was a dork, but today I was the cool kid. One of the places I lived was Pueblo, Colorado. I called the place “where hope goes to die.” It really was true. This is, of course, the classic American story, right? I was fifteen years old and a friend of mine was shot in the head and died because he and his friends were messing around with a gun that he owned. This happens in Pueblo. And this other friend of mine, well we’re trying to figure out how to help her not live at her home because her father beats her, and so we’re trying to help her live at everybody else’s home until he goes back on night shifts so he’s not at home anymore so she can go home. All these horrible, horrible things.

I lived there for a year and, as that world pressed down on you, you felt more and more helpless. You made worse and worse decisions. Everything sort of felt hard. You could see the cascade of your own bad decisions. Okay, why are you in this car driving drunk right now? Because apparently that’s what you do when the trailer next door got lit on fire – and I’m not making that up. In the next moment I figured out it was a terrible spot to be and I applied to go to a private school. I got to go to a private school for the last two years of my High School.

It’s both wealthy and everybody values education,

and it’s college preparatory. Suddenly you’re surrounded by a whole bunch of really smart people who are all going to college and expect that, and everybody values learning and suddenly there are no disasters in anybody’s life, and suddenly your life is no longer a disaster either. It’s like, “Wait a second, I’m the same person, nothing changed except for my location, literally.” That’s fascinating to me. It’s still sort of troubling, and I have other friends who moved out of Pueblo and their lives became night and day different. When they got away – it was like that place was just a miasma.

**CP: How did you go about your research? I know you mentioned environmental journalists, but I’m also curious if there were any other avenues for your research into water rights? If there were people who were turned on to these ideas and wanted to find out more, where would they go?**

PB: The starting point for almost all things water in the Western United States would be Marc Reisner’s *Cadillac Desert*. I actually turned it into a piece of the plot in the book, because you sort of have to pay homage to this book. He talks about how we created and engineered a water utopia in the desert and also how crazy that was. He wrote this book back in the eighties just to describe the whole foolish experiment we were on and said that it was an unsustainable experiment then, and it’s only become more so now. So *Cadillac Desert* is without question the spot that I start with when I think about these things. In terms of the research that I was doing, a lot of it was doing things like going to drought conferences and listening to different experts talking about drought and also watching how political leaders talked about drought. Watching how there were these moments where you could be at a drought conference – and I crashed this one in Denver that was really interesting – Colorado went through a drought in 2012, so I went to their drought conferences. Drought just seems to move around – there’s always one somewhere. It was actually really handy when the book came out last year because California was in a massive drought. It was like the marketing department had just organised weather control on my behalf. Suddenly mine was the most relevant book ever. It was really dark [laughter].

You talk to people who are involved in water infrastructure. I had this really interesting experience of

talking to a water manager from Denver about how they planned for the future, how they think about it and how they assess risk. The thing that was really interesting about that was that I asked him how many droughts he thought Denver could survive that were similar to our 2012 drought and how many years of drought we can survive. He said “well, you know, we could probably last about five years.” I asked him “so what are the chances that could happen?” He said, “you know, in five years all the trees would be dead, we’d be on massive water rationing, you wouldn’t have any more commercial uses of water, so we’d probably cut off the Coca-Cola bottling plant and a bunch of other things like that but we could still be holding on.” So, “okay, how likely is that to happen? That we could have five years of drought like this?” He says “well, it’s never happened before.” You say “climate change effects the whole map. You can’t look at your historical record in any way when you’re planning for risk assessment.” He hemmed and he hawed and it essentially came down to, “well, that’s really complicated and we don’t know.” You suddenly realise that one of the people who’s tasked with doing the risk assessment and doing the planning for a major municipality has no idea how much risk they’re involved in. The consequences are essentially sky-high and the planning is zero. So when you see stuff like that you’re sort of dragging it into the book, you’re turning up the volume on the book. So there are things like that.

It’s a really interesting thing actually, because some of it is sort of book learning stuff. How do aquifers work, and what’s an aquifer pumping like and how do they do aquifer management in Phoenix. You can find these really cool maps of how they do their water pumping and where they’re pumping from, and where the localised zones of depression are, where they’ve pumped their aquifers so much that they’ve actually subsided some – the ground is actually sunk – but also where the Central Arizona Project is be-

ing used. They’re pumping water all the way from the Colorado River, 300 miles across the desert to recharge their aquifers, and you start investigating all this water infrastructure. I actually drove down the Colorado River, then followed and sort of hunted down the Central Arizona Project, this giant canal running through this vast desert. It’s just out there in the middle of nowhere, you know? There’s nothing around you. There’s Ocotillo sticking out, you know, that’s it. You’re out there in this concrete lined canal, by this chain link fence, and there’s this massive man-made river that’s being pumped uphill and across this desert and they actually have a whole dedicated coal power plant to move this water from the Colorado all the way to Phoenix. You go and investigate the infrastructure and nobody’s interested in it, but it’s just lying there. You can find it on *Google Maps*, and then you can go hunt it down on the ground, too. And so I did things like that, you know. It’s all sorts of stuff.

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## Simulation Scenarios in the *Star Trek* Universe Reject Solipsism

Victor Grech

### Introduction

WE RARELY THINK to question the true nature of reality, which seems unambiguous and clear to our senses – a Materialist viewpoint. However, since that which we sense and come to know comes about through a potentially fallible sensory interface, it may well be that the nature of reality is different to that which we perceive, experience, and take as given.

Many thinkers have attempted to come to grips with this contentious issue, and a short list includes Plato, Descartes, Locke, Berkeley, Mill, Heidegger and many others. The essential questions are: what constitutes reality? Is reality comprised of objective matter and energy that are directly accessible to our mind through our senses? Does this then provide an accurate description of the very quintessence of things rather than their possibly imperfect representation as offered to us through our senses? Or is our perceived reality constructed of abstractions, with thoughts reified as subjective concrete experiences? Guba and Lincoln (104) have neatly summarised and categorised these questions as follows:

Ontologically: What is the nature and form of reality, and what is there that can be discovered about it?

Epistemologically: What is the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known?

Methodologically: How can the explorer discover whatever it is believed can be discovered?

Several schools of thought have endeavoured to answer these questions, including idealism, existentialism, pragmatism, phenomenology, logical positivism, metaphysical subjectivism, deconstructionism, and post-modernism (Stokes). Naturally, the very characteristics of the arguments preclude any definitive conclusions, but the increasing realism of 3D high definition television and cinema, videogames,

etc. inevitably make us pause, wonder and reconsider. Indeed, it has been speculated that this universe of ours is some form of computer simulation since

forecasts by serious technologists and futurologists predict that enormous amounts of computing power will be available in the future [...] (t)hen it could be the case that [...] minds like ours do not belong to the original race but rather to people simulated by the advanced descendants of an original race. (Bostrom 1)

The possibility of the mind being fooled into believing in a false reality is an old SF trope, as famously depicted in Gunn's *The Joy Makers* and more recently in film such as the Wachowski brothers' *The Matrix* and Weir's *The Truman Show*.

Jones et al have posited six hypothetical simulation scenarios – that is, theoretical alternative constructs of simulated reality: physical presence, intercept, avatar, android, infinite regression, and monism.

In *Star Trek (ST)*, reality can be altered in two ways: through non-Federation techniques and through Federation holodeck technology. The former may be further subdivided into procedures that deceive the mind and techniques that truly transform the very fabric of reality. Examples of such simulations will be investigated within the *ST* universe which has depicted almost all of these scenarios.

The discussion will then focus on how mind may be duped through the senses and how the possibility of humanity acquiring holodeck technology may have both beneficial and harmful consequences.

### Non-Federation Techniques Deliberate Mental Deception

The Intercept Scenario proposes a situation wherein although we are in complete control of our consciousness, the rest, including our bodies, are artificial constructs, existing solely in the mind, a Matrix-type setting.

This is precisely what happens to Captain Picard when an alien probe paralyses him and dumps his consciousness into an alien setting, living out a life in speed-up/acceleration as a member of an extinct race. This process is an anachrony, one form of deliberate time distortion wherein narrative time is faster than time in the external world. After living out an entire lifetime in twenty-five minutes of objective

time, just before being returned to the *Enterprise*, Picard is told, while still within the simulation, that the aliens had

hoped our probe would encounter someone in the future. Someone who could be a teacher. Someone who could tell the others about us. [...] The rest of us have been gone for a thousand years. If you remember what we were, and how we lived, then we'll have found life again. [...] Now we live in you. Tell them of us. (Lauritson, "The Inner Light")

An even subtler deception occurs when the *Enterprise* is scanned by unknown technology and the memories of the entire ship's crew are selectively and partially erased. They retain practical skills and knowledge but expunged is all knowledge of personal identity, the identities of anyone else, and the ship's mission. The ship's computer is also affected in this discriminating way, and an alien joins the bridge crew. After significant effort, the crew manifest (including a false entry that adds the alien as a high-ranking crew member) and an altered ship's mission are located within the computer. The false mission, spurred on by the alien, is an attack on another alien command and control centre while maintaining communications silence. However, the alien defences are no match for the *Enterprise* which sails into close proximity to the command centre against completely ineffective resistance. It is at this point that the crew balks and refuses to carry out their fraudulent order (Landau, "Conundrum").

Some alien species appear to be able to alter the perception of the nature of reality by mental means alone, thus producing the Monism Scenario, such "that although we are in control of our own consciousness, our bodies and the material world that surrounds us are an artificial construction" (Jones 2). The very first episode of *ST*, the initial pilot, clearly demonstrates this when the *Enterprise* crew encounter aliens with incredible mental abilities. They are able to create

a perfect illusion. They had us seeing just what we wanted to see, human beings who'd survived with dignity and bravery, everything entirely logical, right down to the building of the camp, the tattered clothing, everything. Now let's be sure we understand the danger

of this. The inhabitants of this planet can read our minds. They can create illusions out of a person's own thoughts, memories, and experiences, even out of a person's own desires. Illusions just as real and solid as this table top and just as impossible to ignore. (Butler, "The Cage")

*The Original Series* bridge crew also succumb to aliens in a Monism Scenario when they find themselves in the simulated western town of Tombstone (McEveety, "Spectre of the Gun"), wherein the almost voodoo-like belief that one has been shot by a pistol can be fatal, as happens to *Enterprise* navigator Chekov. The crew thus find themselves forcibly acting the roles of Billy Clanton and the McLaury brothers against imaginary Earp brothers and Doc Holliday in the infamous gunfight at the O.K. Corral. Fortunately, Spock realises the nature of their predicament:

A fact, Captain. Physical laws simply cannot be ignored. Existence cannot be without them. [...] we are faced with a staggering contradiction. The tranquilliser you created should have been effective. [...] His mind killed him. [...] Physical reality is consistent with universal laws. Where the laws do not operate, there is no reality. All of this is unreal. [...] We judge reality by the response of our senses. Once we are convinced of the reality of a given situation, we abide by its rules. We judged the bullets to be solid, the guns to be real, therefore they can kill. [...] Chekov is dead because he believed the bullets would kill him. [...] I know the bullets are unreal, therefore they cannot harm me. [...] The smallest doubt would be enough to kill you. (McEveety, "Spectre of the Gun")

Spock hypnotically convinces his colleagues of the unreality of the situation through a mind-meld, allowing the crew to survive the gunfight:

The bullets are unreal. Without body. They are illusions only. Shadows without substance. They will not pass through your body, for they do not exist. [...] Unreal. Appearances only. [...] Nothing but ghosts of reality. They are lies. Falsehoods. Spectres without body.

They are to be ignored. (McEveety, “Spectre of the Gun”)

### **Deliberate Reworking of Reality**

Reality may be refabricated through the use of vaguely described machinery resulting in a Physical Presence Scenario, as used by the Trelane in “The Squire of Gothos” (McDougall) and by Barash in “Future Imperfect” (Landau). In both episodes, Trelane and Barash abuse their technology and it transpires that both are equivalent to immature, small children. The latter is an even more complex scenario as Barash and his devices bury Riker, the *Enterprise*’s first officer, in several Matryoshka-like layers of nested and totally different realities, which he has to individually penetrate. The reason why Barash sought to retain Riker is that although “(t)he neural scanners read my mind, give me everything I want. [...] the scanners to protect me, [...] give me anything I wanted” (Landau, “Future Imperfect”), this was insufficient: “It’s been so long. I just want somebody real.” This is an example of the the Infinite Regression Scenario, the possibility that existence may be an amalgam of several nested scenarios as already described above, or others that are inconceivable, resulting in a set of “simulations within simulations” that have limitless potential regarding the total number of worlds or universes that might be nested within each other.

Alien beings may also be able to distort or change reality without any obvious reliance on equipment. In “Where Silence Has Lease” (Kolbe), Nagilum, an amorphous being in a self-enclosed universe, is capable of generating the illusion of sentient beings that mimic members of the *Enterprise* crew.

However, the ultimate manipulators of reality are the “Q” species who are literally supernatural, and hence best able to create Physical Presence Scenarios. They are immortal and unbounded by space and time. The Q are also able to surmount all physical universal constraints including natural laws, such as the ability to create matter and energy. This allows the first Q that is encountered in *ST* the potential for an almost infinite number of Loki-like tricks to be played on humanity. Picard accuses him: “you’re next of kin to chaos.” To which Q retorts: “I add a little excitement, a little spice to your lives, and all you do is complain. Where’s your adventurous spirit, your imagination. [...] Think of the possibilities” (Bowman, “Q Who”).

### **Indifferent Simulations**

Both Kirk and Picard find themselves trapped in “The Nexus,” a non-sentient natural phenomenon, an

energy ribbon [...] travelling through the universe. It’s a doorway to another place [...] It’s a place that I’ve tried very, very hard to forget. [...] It was like being inside joy. As if joy was something tangible [...] and you could wrap yourself in it like a blanket. And never in my entire life have I been as content. [...] I would have done anything, [...] anything to get back there. But once I realised that wasn’t possible I learned to live without that. If you go, you’re not going to care about anything. [...] All you’ll want is to stay in the Nexus. And you’re not going to want to come back. (Carson, *Star Trek: Generations*)

This is because the Nexus creates Physical Presence Scenarios that permit each individual trapped within it to bring their imagination to life, an even more powerful ability than active dreaming (Carson, *Star Trek: Generations*).

### **Federation Techniques – The Holodeck**

The holodeck in *ST* is a device that combines several individual and programmable *ST* technologies: replication, transportation and shaped force fields (Grech, “The Trick”). In this way, objects or living creatures and reality itself are simulated, deceiving all five senses. This is a Physical Presence Scenario and immerses individuals “in a virtual environment that is so realistic it cannot be distinguished from the true physical environment” (Jones 2). Indeed, this technology goes beyond simulation:

Riker: I didn’t believe these simulations could be this real.

Data: Much of it is real, sir. If the transporters can convert our bodies to an energy beam, then back to the original pattern again. (Corey, “Encounter at Farpoint”)

Holodecks can be used to fool individuals or even entire races when built to a large enough scale (Frakes, *Star Trek: Insurrection*).

The holodeck itself also provides the possibility of the recreation of the Infinite Regression Scenario, and this is experienced when a being who reaches sentience in the holodeck takes control of the *Enter-*

*prise* and the only way to terminate this control is to deceive him into a simulation within a simulation. Captain Picard then muses that “our reality may [...] just be an elaborate simulation running inside a little device sitting on someone’s table” (Singer, “Ship in a Bottle”).

Two other scenarios have not been mentioned, the Android and Avatar scenarios.

### **The Android Scenario**

This particular scenario exists ubiquitously in *ST* since Data and holograms are synthetic creations, simulated individuals (rather than environments) who theoretically have limits and parameters that are not only physical, but also mental and psychological. However, a recurring theme associated with these characters is their ability to transcend their programming and become more than the sum of their parts – an emergent property (Grech, “The Pinocchio Syndrome”). As the Emergency Medical Hologram is told by his own creator, “You have exceeded the sum of your programming. You’ve accomplished far more than I would have ever predicted” (Kroeker “Endgame”).

### **The Avatar Scenario**

This is not depicted in *ST*, possibly because it is the antithesis of humanism, a strongly held belief of Gene Roddenberry, *ST*’s creator (Alexander 14). This scenario posits the possibility that our bodies are extremely realistic avatars imperceptibly controlled by external beings. Thus, we have no consciousness other than that of the controller. Roddenberry was a humanist, believing both that we should assign prime importance to human rather than divine and supernatural matters and that the search for truth through reason and the scientific method is central. This scenario would completely contravene the *ST* ethos.

### **Discussion**

The true nature of reality and its very definition have been the subject of protracted debate and include the possibility that all is not what it seems. This argument is strengthened by the abovementioned *ST* episodes which emphasise the impermanence of seeming actuality and the ease with which the mind may be deceived with objects that only appear to be authentic. As shown above, these strategies may involve false inputs through the senses or the direct stimulation of the appropriate brain centres that

would normally receive and process sensory inputs, which are then collated and witnessed by the conscious mind.

Most sensory impressions (excluding olfaction) pass through a brain structure called the thalamus which is located under the cerebral cortex. The thalamus selectively filters these signals and relays them to the appropriate part of the cerebral cortex. For example, in the case of vision, electrical impulses relay signals from the eyes to the thalamus and thence to the occipital cortex at the back of the head where visual processing is actually carried out and is then viewed by the conscious mind which is located more anteriorly in the cerebral cortex.

In some of the abovementioned narratives, only the illusion of the substance exists and such chimeras may be created by the unspecified presentation of false data either directly to the senses, at the thalamic level, or precisely to the appropriate locus in the cerebral cortex.

To a greater or lesser extent, these possibilities also support the Cartesian tenet of doubt. The rationalist philosopher René Descartes (1596-1650) argued that knowledge is gained from the senses, which may mislead even under ordinary circumstances. The opportunity for error is therefore greatly multiplied by the possibilities shown in these narratives. Moreover, simulations may encourage philosophic solipsism, the conjecture that only the self exists, as speculated by the presocratic Greek sophist, Gorgias of Leontini (c. 483–375 BC). This may, in turn, lead to vulgar solipsism, an extreme egoistic self-absorption and self-indulgence of one’s feelings and desires.

Bishop George Berkeley (1685-1763) was an Irish philosopher, a contemporary of Newton and the father of philosophical idealism. Berkeley argues against our inherent intuitions and contends that objects we see are in reality immaterial, and that nothing exists outside of the mind and its observing senses. This is known as Idealism, a philosophical concept that states that reality as we perceive it is a mental construction. This notion dates back to ancient Grecian times. The pre-Socratic philosopher Anaxagoras (c. 500- 428 BC) argued that *Nous* (Mind) not only created the physical universe but was also the ordering force behind it. More recently, Berkeley proposed an Inconceivability Argument which can be summarised as *esse est percipi* (to be is to be perceived). This is the view that the physical universe is merely a perception since according to



Berkeley it is impossible to attempt to conceive of an object existing independent of anybody observing it.

Berkeley further argued that our perceptions are produced for us by God, who is omnipotent and omnipresent and perceives everything at all times. Hence, even objects unobserved by us maintain their existence in our absence. The Supreme Being is therefore also directly responsible for our ideas. This theistic organisational viewpoint is very infrequently acknowledged in *ST* and is obliquely alluded to by Picard:

Considering the marvellous complexity of our universe, its clockwork perfection, its balances of this against that, matter, energy, gravitation, time, dimension, I believe that our existence must be more than either of these philosophies. That what we are goes beyond Euclidian and other practical measuring systems and that our existence is part of a reality beyond what we understand now as reality. (Kolbe, "Where Silence Has Lease")

Of all of the abovementioned tropes, the holodeck is the only technology conceivably within humanity's grasp. A common use for the holodeck is the Epicurean penchant for starship crews to relax sensibly. Epicurus (341-271 BC) advocated the pursuit of happiness and taught that temperance and prudence are crucial strictures that also apply inside the holodeck.

Thus, the holodeck permits individuals or groups of individuals to enter novels (Scanlan, "The Big Goodbye"), recreate historical events such as the Battle of the Alamo (Vejar, "The Changing Face of Evil") and the Battle of Britain (Livingston, "Homefront"), watch past famous baseball games (Lobl, "For The Uniform"), provide the opportunity for calisthenics (Mayberry, "Code of Honour") and set the stage for a romantic date (Beaumont, "Booby Trap").

Individuals may even become strongly attracted to completely simulated holographic characters who have no real life counterparts. Riker, for example, is captivated by a holographic woman, who muses "A dream? Is that what this is? Is that what I am?" Riker confesses to his captain: "It's uncanny. I could develop feelings for Minuet, exactly as I would for any woman." To which Picard replies "Doesn't love always begin that way? With the illusion being more real than the woman?" (Lynch, "11001001").

In short, the attitude toward the holodeck is that "(t)here's nothing wrong with a healthy fantasy life, as long as you don't let it take over", a Heinleinian attitude that was prefigured by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), who felt that we should lead lives as we see fit unless we impinge on the happiness of others. Indeed, "as far as I'm concerned what you do in the holodeck is your own business, as long as it doesn't interfere with your work" (Bole, "Hollow Pursuits"). This technology is therefore viewed as being ethically neutral: "it was not the machine, but what one did with the machine that was its meaning or message" (McLuhan 7).

The holodeck may also be used for educational and research purposes, including meeting simulations of famous minds such as Isaac Newton, Albert Einstein and Steven Hawking (Singer, "Descent"). Moreover, recreations of individuals may also help solve scientific/engineering difficulties (Beaumont, "Booby Trap").

However, activity in the holodeck appears to be controlled by inexplicit moral rules. For example, in *Deep Space 9*, in Quark's bar, sexual holo-adventures appear to be available for a price, but it is not allowed to duplicate real persons within the holodeck for such activities as "(i)t is kind of unusual, recreating people you already know" (Frakes, "Meridian"). However, a laudable exception is shown to be life saving when a Vulcan science officer (Tuvok) on the stranded starship *Voyager* enters *pon farr*, a physiological condition that occurs every seven years for males of this species wherein they must mate with their wife or die. Tom Paris, the ship's helmsman, offers to program the holodeck to simulate Tuvok's wife:

Tuvok: I am a married man.

Paris: It's the holodeck, Tuvok. It doesn't count.

Tuvok: Is that what you tell your wife?

Paris: No, of course not. [...] You wouldn't be breaking your vows if it's a hologram of your wife (McNeill, "Body and Soul").

Moreover *Voyager's* captain Janeway deems it inappropriate to romantically and/or sexually consort with her subordinates, and she therefore programs a virtual lover. However, he is too compliant for her wishes, so she locks herself out of the holodeck controls, in essence giving the character a modicum of

free will.

The comfortable simulations of the holodeck may also lead to holo-addiction, which is usually an escape mechanism that is symptomatic of deep psychological problems wherein the addictee spends time in manufactured realities within the holodeck in preference to the real external reality (Bole, "Hollow Pursuits").

In *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, a recurring character has severe issues with holo-addiction. The individual in question is a Lt. Barclay, whose name is almost certainly an allusion to Berkeley. Barclay's addiction stems from his "history of seclusive tendencies [...] he's always late. The man's nervous. Nobody wants to be around this guy". This is because Barclay is far more confident inside the controlled and ultimately predictable simulated environment of the holodeck than in the rough and tumble of real life. His superior observes: "[y]ou're going to be able to write the book on holoaddiction" and he is forced to undergo psychological counselling after being caught programming the holodeck with droll simulations of fellow crew members that the real-life versions found objectionable (*Star Trek: The Next Generation*).

Barclay resurfaces in *Voyager*, where he reveals that he never fully unpacked and moved into his apartment, admitting that "(f)or some reason I never slept in my apartment as comfortably as I did in my holographic quarters" (Vejar, "Pathfinder").

Fortunately, Barclay has some insight, confessing to his psychologist "I've lost myself [...] I wanted to, er, fine tune my plan, so, I er, just went right back to work. [...] I needed someone to, er bounce ideas off of. Someone to help focus my thoughts. [...] went back to the Holodeck [...] They're the only people that I can talk to. [...] (T)hey help me with my work [...] If an obsession helps me to do my job better, it's a sacrifice I am willing to make. A little instability in exchange [...] more important than my psychological condition"

But the down side is that Barclay gets "the days mixed up" and fails to complete assigned work and attend important appointments. His psychologist accuses him: "Poker? Massages? Sleeping in holographic quarters? Sounds more like escape than work [...] Look at yourself. You're experiencing acute anxiety, sleeplessness, paranoia. [...] We need to take care of you."

However, almost to the very end, he remains in de-

nial, claiming that "There is nothing wrong with me [...] this isn't a relapse of [...] holo-addiction" (ibid), before finally acknowledging his problem.

A common thread that runs through all of the above is the presupposition that a simulation "(i)sn't real [...] Nothing here is. [...] Nothing here matters," as opposed to the real world, outside of a simulation, because in the real world, "while you're there, you can make a difference" (Carson, *Star Trek: Generations*).

Indeed, wish-fulfillment and a complete lack of challenge is inbuilt in the holodeck, which incorporates safety-protocols that are designed to protect the users. Weapons therefore cannot wound or kill and falls are cushioned and so on (Scanlan, "The Big Goodbye"). However, *ST*'s Federation champions exploration, even at the cost of some risk, and like Kirk ensconced within the Nexus, the removal of true obstacles and satisfaction guaranteed without effort is regarded with contempt.

Conversely, when holographic characters gain sentience, they only appear real when they interact with the real world and make a difference. For example, the Emergency Medical Hologram (doctor) on *Voyager* becomes a vital and actively contributing senior member of the crew when the human doctor dies.

In conclusion, in the epicurean *ST* universe, simulations are seen as tolerable in small doses with ethical and suitable goals, such as reasonable recreation and for the purposes of work-related simulations, but abhorrent when overused and abused merely for the achievement of one's self-satisfaction, thereby rejecting any solipsistic tendencies.

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## ***An Astounding War: Science Fiction and World War II***

Bruce A. Beatie

Wysocki, Edward M., Jr. *An Astounding War: Science Fiction and World War II*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2015. Paperback, 299 pages, \$24.95, ISBN: 978-1499647006, and available on Kindle.

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DR. WYSOCKI is a presumably retired electrical engineer who earned his Ph.D. at Johns Hopkins and spent his working life with a major defense contractor. He had been “reading the works of Heinlein and other science fiction authors,” he says, “since the third grade” but became “acquainted with magazine science fiction” only in 1968, “when I encountered *Analog*” (*War* 3). At the 1983 WorldCon in Baltimore he bought a book on Heinlein that led him to intensive studies of Heinlein, and in 1993 he published a note titled “The Great Heinlein Mystery” in *Shipmate*, the journal of the U. S Naval Academy Alumni Association (*Mystery* 25). He began contributing short articles to *Heinlein Journal* in 1999 and to *Science Fiction Studies* in 2010; he delivered a paper on “The Creation of Heinlein’s ‘Solution Unsatisfactory’” at the 2008 SFRA conference, which was reprinted in the collection *Practicing Science Fiction: Critical Essays on Reading and Teaching the Genre* (McFarland 2010). In 2012 he published his own book on *The Great Heinlein Mystery*, which was reviewed favorably by Don Sakers in *Analog*’s “Reference Library.” The “mystery,” at least to an engineer, came up in a letter Heinlein wrote in 1941 to *Astounding*’s editor which claimed that “a device in one of his stories had inspired a real-life device [classified then and still so in 1955] used by the Navy in World War II” (Sakers). The book recounts the story, “fascinating from beginning to end,” of Wysocki’s attempt to identify that device (Sakers).

Like *Mystery*, *An Astounding War* makes use of and expands some of Wysocki’s journal publications; an article titled “Astounding and World War II” ap-

peared in *Science Fiction Studies* in 2012. Unlike *Mystery*, the new book is unlikely to be “fascinating from beginning to end,” since there is no special goal; his research has collected a lot of information about the reflections of World War II (the period from 1939 to 1945) in the fiction and nonfiction published in *Astounding* during that period. To some extent each of the ten chapters can be read independently of the others. “The primary purpose of the first four chapters,” Wysocki says in his “Summary,” was “to provide historical background of the pulp magazines and science fiction” during the war, especially in *Astounding* (*War* 223). Chapters five through nine, “Atomic Energy and Atomic Bombs,” “The Combat Information Center,” “The Naval Aircraft Factory,” “Technical Suggestions,” and “Helping to Defeat the Kamikazes,” discuss, often in highly technical detail, special war-related topics, with particular concern for Heinlein’s stories—of the eighty-nine page references to him in the “Index,” only eighteen are from the first four chapters.

The first chapter, “The Magazines,” recounts the publication history of twenty-one pulp SF magazines published through 1945, from *Amazing Stories* to *Weird Tales*. The chapter was interesting to me because I started reading SF in the late 1940s and, until I joined the Air Force in 1953, had collected a large number of issues of the magazines Wysocki discusses. His Table 1 (*War* 12) lists those twenty-one titles, and he notes that “in early 1938 only four of the magazines...were in existence: *Amazing Stories*, *Astounding Science Fiction*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, and *Weird Tales*,” and that “all of them survived through World War II” (*War* 13). His comments on the twenty-one magazines include details of publication history, formats, changes of editor, and changes in mode of payment. Of the twenty-one magazines he discusses, only *Analog* (originally *Astounding Stories*) has been publishing without interruption, though with changes in name and format, since 1930—a run of eighty-five years. *Amazing Stories*, founded in 1926, ceased publication in 2005 after eighty years. *Weird Tales*, which Wysocki notes as “the oldest magazine” (*War* 13), ran from 1923 to 1954 (thirty-two years); its revivals in 1970, 1981, and 1984 were brief, but a fourth revival in 1988 is still listed by Wikipedia as “current,” though its last issue listed (number 362) appeared in Spring of 2014.

For his second chapter, “The Authors,” Wysocki uses *The Internet Speculative Fiction DataBase* to



choose twenty-three authors who published frequently in *Astounding* during the war. In Tables 2 and 3 (*War* 36) he lists the authors who appeared respectively in the years 1939 to 1941 (before the United States entered the war), and 1942-1945 (when the war ended), with the number of appearances (including serial parts counted separately); he included only a few of the authors with smaller counts “for reasons that should become clear”—presumably because they were important post-1945 contributors to *Astounding* (*War* 35). The body of the chapter consists of an alphabetical series of short biographies of these authors with comments on their publications. Thirteen of the authors published in the first period, twenty in the second, and the lists overlap. Only three of the first set do not also appear in the second: Nathaniel Schachner (eleven stories—his first in 1931), L. Sprague de Camp (ten), and Theodore Sturgeon (nine). Heinlein leads the first list with twenty-two appearances, but has only four in the second. Of those new to the second set, C. L. Moore (twenty-six) and Henry Kuttner (twenty-four) appear most frequently (Wysocki’s biography considers them together since they married in 1940), but their totals are beaten by Malcom Jamieson (a combined total of thirty in the two sets—his first SF story appeared in *Astounding* in 1938). The grand champion, however, is the Canadian-born A. E. van Vogt (ten and thirty appearances in the two sets); he and his wife E. Mayne Hull (eight stories in the second set) share a single biography, since they married in 1939.

The third and fourth chapters consider references in *Astounding* to the war in two aspects. In “The War-time Stories,” Table 4 (68) begins with Wysocki’s “classification scheme”: (1) War stories with an SF component, (2) Stories that transpose WW II events to another time or planet, (3) Stories referring to atomic research, and (4) Stories referring to technologies that can be connected with WW II. The fourth chapter, “Opinions and Facts” discusses the same sort of references in Campbell’s editorials and in nonfiction articles related to the war by Campbell and others.

While the first two chapters are clearly organized, fairly concise, and provide much information, Wysocki’s technological background leads him to be overly detailed in the remaining eight chapters—probably “more about penguins” than the average SF reader would like. I cannot agree, however, with

Sakers’s comment that Wysocki is “a normal science fiction reader of no real distinction.” There are few scholars and critics who would undertake, or have undertaken, the decades-long research on a very narrow subject evident in Wysocki’s two books.

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## ***Mondo Nano: Fun and Games in the World of Digital Matter***

Andrew Hageman

Milburn, Colin. *Mondo Nano: Fun and Games in the World of Digital Matter*. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2015. Paperback, 418 pages, \$28.95, ISBN 978-0-8223-5743-8.

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IF YOU’RE AN Up-Up-Down-Down-Left-Right-Left-Right-B-A-Start sort of reader, I recommend beginning Colin Milburn’s *Mondo Nano: Fun and Games in the World of Digital Matter* with the final chapter. These last pages pull back from the tunneling-microscope close readings throughout the book to articulate a concise and compelling two-part argument for studying nanotech in the social imaginary. On the one hand, Milburn synthesizes the chapters as analyses of nanotechnology itself; on the other hand, this conclusion reframes this study of nanotechnology as a grappling with how to be an educated and informed civic member in our current condition of data overload in the digital world. What’s more, Milburn notes that *Mondo Nano* was around ten years in the making, and this is reflected in the detailed depths and sustained insights within individual chapters and as the chapters bleed across each other. At a time when the prescience and popularity of nanotech critique can engender hurried work, *Mondo Nano* presents a model of rigor and interdisciplinarity in its focus on

recursive dynamics of science and science fiction.

On *Mondo Nano* as model, two specific elements of the book are outstanding. First, each chapter alone and the relationship among them within a whole are engaging formal experiments. It's like reading a strange amalgamation of the form-reinforcing-argument magnificence of works like N. Katherine Hayles's *How We Became Posthuman* (1999) and Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* (1981) with the lively linguistic starbursts of Jacques Derrida's "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" (1966), the latter of which Milburn cites as influence. Milburn's formal play takes many forms, from the binary designation of chapter sequence to occasional quotations presented in code format like little nano-gear pivots between sections of prose to rapid-fire juxtapositions to illustrate resonance across nanotech research discourse, *The Wizard of Oz* (1939), *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* (1975), and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1590s), for example (83). The forms of play shift with each chapter of *Mondo Nano*, offering complementary approaches to clusters of material from science and science fiction and keeping us intrigued by subsequent levels rather than tiring of a single shtick. Second, Milburn models innovative ways of imagining and conducting scholarly research and writing. To read *Mondo Nano* is simultaneously to consider Milburn's analyses of nanotech in labs and the social imaginary and to be inspired to devise research that opens up new questions to ask in the Humanities.

Science fiction scholars may be particularly interested in the range of science fiction texts engaged. To be sure, the usual suspects like Neal Stephenson, William Gibson, and David Cronenberg are included, but there are significant ventures into the likes of Theodore Sturgeon and Robert Heinlein amongst earlier SF writers (some of this developing new directions since Milburn's previous book, *Nanovision* (2008), in which he studies at length the influence of SF on Richard Feynman's famous speech on the idea of nanotech), as well as close and/or conversational readings of more contemporary SF video games and graphic novels. As such, *Mondo Nano* articulates new lines and lineages of connection between Golden Age SF, Cyberpunk, and subsequent Nanotech SF. A salutary secondary effect of this extensive treasure trove of texts is inspiration for new materials to bring into the classroom. As critical video game studies as

well as nanotech culture continue to advance, *Mondo Nano* provides primary texts and approaches to them that offer faculty ready to explore the territory useful points of entry.

Amongst the diverse chapters, several are especially outstanding. In one chapter, Milburn tracks a proposal from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to the U.S. Army to launch an Institute for Soldier Nanotechnologies (ISN). Accompanying its text, the proposal included an image that very clearly resembles Valerie Fiore from the graphic novel *Radix*. Milburn quotes correspondence between Ray and Ben Lai, the creators of *Radix*, and the MIT ISN to unpack the discourses and ideologies at work and at stake in this case of science and science fiction bleeding across each others' borders, or, perhaps, rather, revealing that these apparent borders are always already highly porous. Another chapter follows the proposal for a Nano City to be built in India—a place that Milburn describes as an amalgamation of Northern California/Silicon Valley values with a Himalayan foothills geography and culture. Suggestively, the capacity to imagine technofutures in this particular case is deeply challenged not by technological limits but rampant real estate speculation whenever word spreads that a tract is being scouted for the project. Finally, the most playful and provocative chapter unfolds through a set of interactions between Milburn's *Second Life* avatar, Colin Dayafter, and someone whose avatar is named PerkyPat Sorciere. They met at a lecture with Q&A session given by Kim Stanley Robinson and subsequently met up in different *Second Life* venues to converse while exploring places from a Sri Ganesha Hindu Temple and the Cal Tech Jet Propulsion Lab to a cell (the image on the book's cover) and some replicating genomes. While the *Second Life* element underscores the traffic between digital and analog, science and science fiction worlds, the two-person conversation presents Milburn's core ideas from the book in a very different register, offering them to the reader in a new way and at the same time clearly enabling Milburn to explore them in a new way, with another. I won't spoil the chapter's twist ending, but suffice it to say it is a provocative play that retroactively reframes the chapter, perhaps the book itself. In sum, *Mondo Nano* is a radical reading journey that can take us deeply and critically into nanotech culture and inspire new modes of scholarship and pedagogy.

# **The Culture Series of Iain M. Banks: A Critical Introduction**

Hugh Charles O'Connell

Paul Roland, *Steampunk: Back to the Future with the New Victorians*, Harpenden, Hers, UK, Oldcastle Books, Ltd., 2014. Paperback, 192 pages, \$17.95. ISBN 1-978-184344-249-3. Kindle \$8.23. ISBN 9781843442516.

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FOR MANY READERS of the *SFRA Review*, the untimely loss of Iain M. Banks still weighs heavy. The last Culture novel, *The Hydrogen Sonata*, retroactively reads like a wistful elegy, weaving moving ruminations on mortality through vast thickets of political intrigue and technological speculation. By returning to the origins of the Culture and its place amongst the other galactic-faring civilization that increasingly occupied the later novels, *The Hydrogen Sonata* can't help but feel like both a closing chapter and retrospective on both the author and his works. Simone Caroti's *The Culture Series of Iain M. Banks* (2015) enters this prematurely foreclosed world as an introduction to the now extant and completed series of SF novels that reintroduced space opera as a sophisticated vehicle for "smuggling large amounts of serious discourse under the guise of a romp through space" (155).

Caroti's book thus joins older works such as *Iain Banks's Complicity: A Reader's Guide* (2003), as well as a host of newer texts, including *The Transgressive Iain Banks: Essays on a Writer Beyond Borders* (2013), covering both the sf and non-sf novels; *Gothic Dimensions: Iain Banks, Timelord* (2013), the first to cover the entirety of Banks' body of work; and *Mediating the World in the Novels of Iain Banks* (2014), which offers a sustained argument across the entirety of the non-sf works. These will soon be joined by at least two more volumes for the Gylphi Contemporary Writers Critical Essays series, focused exclusively on the non-sf novels, and a volume slated for Indiana University Press's Modern Masters of Science Fiction Series.

What sets this study apart from such works is Caroti's exclusive critical focus on the Culture series. Caroti approaches the series as a closed set that de-

velops and modifies its vision of a fulfilled utopian political theory across the long arc of the series. In this light, Caroti paves a straightforward linear path, with chapters devoted to analyses of grouped texts in the order of their publication. Building on the work of Nick Gevers, Caroti posits "a three-stage process of progressive refinement parsed by two long periods of reassessment. The first stage involves the Culture's creation and setting up, and it encompasses the period between 1974 and 1990," including *Consider Phlebas*, *The Player of Games*, and *Use of Weapons* and *The State of the Art* (183). After a six year lull, the second period begins with three novels that form "an overarching narrative strategy aimed at describing the Culture's ethos – and the practice of this ethos – from three different power-related viewpoints: *Excession* is the glimpse from greater power, *Inversions* from lesser power, and *Look to Windward* from equal power" (184). Another eight-year hiatus follows before the final trilogy of *Matter*, *Surface Detail*, and *The Hydrogen Sonata* appears. This last period is characterized by the placement of the Culture into a more deeply considered social and political context as just one galactically involved player amongst its peer and lesser socio-political organizations.

As an introductory critical evaluation, the book spends considerable time on synopses of the various novels that tease out the uniting themes of the series, even as they are deployed in disparate and occasionally contradictory fashion. Chapter one considers Banks' development as an author, the failure of his early attempts at SF and the emergence of his first critically well-received non-SF novels and their relationship to the later Culture novels. While Caroti does a good job of teasing out the SF and fantasy motifs of Banks' literary fiction, presenting the early works as constituted by both realism and fantastika, some of the thematic congruence he draws between the Culture and early mainstream fiction can feel a little forced. This is especially true in his discussion of *The Bridge* and postscarcity. The latter is integral for the utopian dimensions of the Culture series, but it is hard to see how it applies in a meaningfully structural way to *The Bridge*. However, his assertion that the "industrial dystopias of the bridge and of contemporary Britain would morph into similarly structured societies" of the first era Culture novels is astute (41).

While the chapter on the literary works prior to the



Culture series is in keeping with the book's premise, the chapters on the three movements of the Culture series are the main attraction. Caroti devotes a chapter each to *Consider Phlebas*, *The Player of Games*, and an intertextual analysis of *Use of Weapons* and *The State of the Art*, developing each novel's structurally thematic antimony as the hallmark of the utopian-dystopian divide that animates each novel's political stakes and the development of the Culture series at large. The second movement with its internal self-critique and refinement gets two chapters, one devoted to a conceptual pairing of *Excession* (the Culture as viewed "from above" by the AI Minds) and *Inversions* (the Culture as viewed from below by one of the less advanced societies that Special Circumstances are imbedded in), and a second devoted to *Look to Windward* and the political imposition of the first of the neoimperial wars in Iraq for the Culture's own politics of contact and intervention. Between these two sections, Caroti provides a brief critical interlude that focuses on Banks's "A Few Notes on the Culture," which he links to his readings of the first phase of the Culture as being in line with early academic criticism that posits the Culture as a new form of what Tom Moylan has famously dubbed "critical utopias." The concept of critical utopianism becomes central to the development and deployment of Caroti's critical stance.

The third period, comprising *Matter*, *Surface Detail* and *The Hydrogen Sonata*, is given one comparatively short chapter. This is a shame as these novels have received the least amount of critical attention, and as a result, they would have provided ample opportunity for Caroti to develop his own original critical stance and to set the terms for future analysis and debate. That this doesn't happen illustrates one of the weaknesses of this otherwise fine introductory text: the critical impetus of the book is largely deployed reactively against other, earlier readings. This results in the unbalanced development and deployment of the critical apparatus, making the book ultimately feel uneven by providing more of summary and response rather than an original unifying argument.

However, this should not be taken to suggest that Caroti's employment of the critical utopian stance is insignificant. Indeed, he uses it to tie three important strands of criticism together, arguing that the critically utopian drive of the novels is the governing ideology that recasts their deconstructive tenden-

cies into reconstruction and their wrestling with the neoimperial, neoliberal auspices of intervention as the critical spark that constantly reignites the work of critical utopian politics. Key for Caroti is that "utopia is first and foremost – an argument [, ...] because utopia is either self-sustaining through a dialectic process or it ceases to exist" (106, 112). Caroti continues, "[t]he ultimate goal, within and without the story, is to make the core argument of utopia survive unscathed through all the pressures and critiques, its integrity validated by the society's very willingness to reassess and reevaluate itself without ever stopping" (123).

The significance of Caroti's utopian argument lies in his middle chapters, devoted largely to the second period, and especially *Look to Windward*. Here, he defends the utopian reconstructionist strain of the Culture series from what he sees as more nihilistically deconstructive and postmodern criticisms that began to appear especially after the publication of *Look to Windward*. While there is much of merit in this redemptive, utopian reading, especially in the way that, after Clute, it takes the economic aspects of postscarcity as being the guiding force of Banks' utopian vision, some greater conceptual nuance between the conditions of classical imperialism and postmodern neoimperial Empire (as popularized by Hardt and Negri) would make Caroti's intervention even stronger and more convincing. Similarly, for a text that purports to be comprehensive in its presentation of the critical material on the Culture, it would have been nice to see some engagement with the significant essays by Sherryl Vint, especially given her work on the intersections of liberal humanism, capitalism, and imperial intervention in *Look to Windward*.

While an introductory text can be forgiven for downplaying a strong critical intervention in favor of a more thoroughgoing and generalized overview, what is harder to overlook is the poor editing that mars this book. There are far too many casual line-editing typos ("in" for "on," "he" for "the," etc.). Moreover, the bibliography section it includes more editing errors (Clute, for example, comes after Colebrook) and references that do not always have bibliographic entries (a reference to "Brown 2004" carries no corresponding bibliographic entry; there are four authors with the surname of Brown in the bibliography, but none with articles listed from 2004). Hopefully, these errors will be corrected in any fu-



ture editions.

Iain Banks was possessed of an indomitable spirit and prodigious imagination; the greatest strength of this book is its celebration of the scale and scope of that spirit as it manifests itself in the Culture series. The fan in me reveled in the opportunity to relive the intricacies of these novels as fleshed out by Caroti's carefully nuanced close readings. Indeed, Caroti's considered intertextual analysis of *Use of Weapons* and *The State of the Art* is enlightening, as is his excellent stylistic analysis of *Excession*. However, the academic in me, very much interested in the British Boom and socialist utopianism, wished for a more developed and sustained critical drive. However, while the book is a bit uneven, attempting not altogether successfully the difficult task of balancing a critical summary of the Culture's phases of development, an overview of the critical and academic reception, and the author's own particular critical argument, all of the pieces are substantially present – an admirable success in a single, short, and accessible volume. As such, it provides a useful introduction to Banks' monumental series, and should be sought out by critics and readers.

## ***Calling Dr. Strangelove: The Anatomy and Influence of the Kubrick Masterpiece***

Simon Spiegel

George Case. *Calling Dr. Strangelove. The Anatomy and Influence of the Kubrick Masterpiece*. Jefferson: McFarland & Co. 2014. Paperback, 212 pages, \$40.00, ISBN 978-0-7864-9449-1. Ebook ISBN: 978-1-4766-1848-7.

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THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT that Stanley Kubrick's 1964 movie *Dr. Strangelove or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* is a classic. It is generally regarded as an iconic film and one of the very few truly successful filmic satires. Among other outcomes, it was also the film that definitively lifted its director into a higher sphere. Kubrick's next project

was the groundbreaking SF epic *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), and from then on until his death in 1999, the director seemed to play in a league entirely of his own. This rise into the Olympus of cinema would not have been possible had it not been for the success – both critical and commercial – of *Dr. Strangelove*.

Although the movie's status seems of little dispute, George Case feels that time has not treated it kindly. According to him, it has been "divorced from the social and historical context in which it originated, and its underlying themes and incidental details risk going unrecognized by contemporary audiences" (2). While some of its images, like the one of Slim Pickens riding the atomic bomb at the end of the movie, or phrases like "Gentlemen, you can't fight in here. This is the War Room!" have long since entered pop culture, Case thinks that its specific Cold War background is lost to younger audiences. This assessment might be true to some degree, and a proper account of the situation in which the movie was produced is certainly in order. However, Case's other declared goal seems rather irritating. In his eyes, *Dr. Strangelove* does not get the credit it deserves because it is overshadowed by Kubrick's later works.

Saying this about a movie that regularly makes it into all kinds of "best of" lists seems odd. Even odder is Case's effort to show that "judging as successful integrations of screenplay, acting, set design, photography and editing, *Dr. Strangelove* stands above the rest [of Kubrick's films]" (3). According to Case, one reason for the the movie's unique quality is that the director relied more on the contributions from other artists than in any other production. In other words, *Dr. Strangelove* is Kubrick's best movie because it is not a proper Kubrick movie.

Case is, of course, entitled to value *Dr. Strangelove* more highly than other Kubrick movies. But his approach to "prove" its superior quality by using its director as a kind of evidence against itself is more than peculiar, especially given the fact that Kubrick always relied heavily on his collaborators. They might not always have received proper credit for their work, but one of Kubrick's great strengths had always been choosing highly capable contributors whom he pushed to – and often beyond – their limits. Above all, *Dr. Strangelove* simply does not need such a rehabilitation. Case's zeal to vindicate his subject gives his study a completely unnecessary bent.

The book tracks the movie's genesis and its impact in five chapters. While the first is dedicated to its

prehistory and the second to its production, chapter three is a detailed walkthrough of the actual movie with background information for basically every scene. Chapter four then deals with the immediate reactions to the movie, while the last chapter is dedicated to the movie's heritage and Kubrick's later career.

*Calling Dr. Strangelove's* goal is an accessible account of how the movie came to be and of its major themes, and not some highbrow interpretation. Accordingly, the emphasis is on facts. We get little to no theory, but instead short biographies of basically everyone who was important for the movie, from military strategist Herman Kahn to set designer Ken Adam and novelist Peter George. Among other goals, Case wants to redeem George's novel *Two Hours to Doom* – published in the US as *Red Alert* – on which the movie is based. He strongly emphasizes that George's thriller "portrayed the mechanics of nuclear brinkmanship as comprehensively and as accurately as any scholarly or journalistic study of its time" (15). Indeed, one of Case's main points – and one that Kubrick himself was notoriously proud of – is how realistic *Dr. Strangelove* is, even and especially in its most absurd moments.

The story of how Kubrick, during the writing of the screenplay, regularly came up with situations that seemed too grotesque for a serious film, and how he finally decided to turn this weakness into a strength, is part of the folklore surrounding *Dr. Strangelove*. Case cannot shed new light on this part of the story, but he convincingly shows how this approach fitted a general cultural trend, ranging from Tom Lehrer

to *MAD* magazine, which mocked the prospect of a nuclear war. The American writer Terry Southern, coming from a Beat-infused New York background, intensified this ironic over-the-top attitude even more. Equally important for *Dr. Strangelove's* peculiar flavor of comedy was Peter Sellers, with whom Kubrick had already worked on *Lolita*. Sellers was the star of the picture who not only played three different characters – originally he was also meant to act as Major Kong – but whose salary accounted for almost half of the movie's budget. His improvisations, which Kubrick strongly encouraged, shaped the movie in significant ways.

While there is nothing really earth-shattering in *Calling Dr. Strangelove*, it does contain many nuggets of fascinating information. Case also debunks some dearly beloved myths like the story of how Ronald Reagan supposedly asked to see the War Room when he became president. Apparently, there is no source for this anecdote; rather, it seems to be an invention by some of Reagan's opponents.

*Calling Dr. Strangelove* lives up to its claim to give a comprehensive account of Kubrick's movie. Nevertheless, Case's curious insistence that *Dr. Strangelove* is Kubrick's underappreciated masterpiece infuses the whole book in a strangely unproductive way and leads to some completely pointless side blows; for example, when Case mocks the fact that Kubrick was married three times. This is really unfortunate: *Calling Dr. Strangelove* would have been a much better book if its author had not followed such a strange agenda.

## ***Ma Gli Androidi Mangiano Spaghetti Elettrici?***

Jana Vizmuller-Zocco

Grasso, Francesco, Minicangeli, Marco, and Mongai, Massimo (eds.). *Ma Gli Androidi Mangiano Spaghetti Elettrici?* [But Do Androids Eat Electric Spaghetti?] Arese, MI: Edizioni Della Vigna, 2015. 330 Pages, paperback, Euros 15.00, ISBN 978-88-5276-136-9.

**Order option(s):** [Kindle](#)

THE PUBLICATION OF this anthology of 18 short stories belongs to the thematic tables of Expo Milan 2015: *Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life*. All the authors are relatively well-known writers of science fiction and other genres as well. Each short story is briefly introduced by one of the editors in a short note, explaining their personal or professional relationship with the author.

In lieu of an introduction, Roberto Paura's *Prefazione* (vii-xiv) sets the table for a gastronomic excursion into the future, underlying the human obsession with, need for, and tragic errors made regarding food. Many science fiction stories are a reaction to real-world endeavours to grapple with alternate ways of feeding humans, often as a result of overpopulation, disagreements on the safety of GMOs, meat/fish controversies, unsustainable development, etc. The collection of short stories illustrates this tendency.

Although it would be truly worthwhile to analyze each story in depth, as they span more than one of the themes mentioned, what follows aims to simply capture the three principal clusters found within the narrations. The first cluster's premise is constructed around alimentary regulations with concomitant prohibitions. The question to be answered is "What happens when food intake is strictly controlled: legally, economically, socially, psychologically, whether on Earth or on a terraformed planet?" Stories within this regulatory theme deal with the reactions to the prohibitions and the protagonists' attempts to avoid them (for example, once they taste the unregulated food). These regulatory controls have an effect on

the whole of society, redefining also what legality means. Belonging to this cluster are Giulia Abbate's "Calendario della semina", Donato Altomare's "Mens sana...", Michele Piccolino's "Caramelle da uno sconosciuto", and Roberto Vacca's "Cambiano i tempi e noi cambiamo in essi".

The second cluster's proposition concerns the manner in which alternate sources of food answer (or do not) the problems of hunger and social inequality, as well as ethical and scientific concerns which may, for example, affect human mutation, as well as non-human beings. Stories focusing on this include Davide Camparsi's "La pecora perduta", Vittorio Catani's "Un gusto nuovo e forte", Elena Di Fazio "Più uguali degli altri", Francesca Garelli's "Future Food District", Marco Minicangeli's "L'ultima caccia", Giuseppe Perciabosco's "La carne degli dei", Luigina Sgarro's "Profumo di caffè", and Alessandro Vietti's "Indovina chi viene a cena".

The third cluster revolves around the idea of two types of humans/other beings: those who control the production and distribution of food/water and those who are outside this circle; in other words, those who have something to eat/drink and those who do not. The former are usually technologically savvy, ethically unconcerned, ready to defend their turf and to invade the territories of the latter, who are "less intelligent" but hungry on account of power struggles which they have lost. This loss, however, may be the invaders' salvation. Stories belonging to this thematic cluster include Francesco Grasso's "La stirpe dei corvi", Maico Morellini's "La confraternita dei Rabbdomanti", Errico Passaro's "Il pasto invisibile", and Francesco Verso's "Italiani, tikaj, tikaj".

Two stories lie outside these three clusters. Andrea Angiolino's "Ritorno a casa" has human descendants return to an Earth devastated by a nuclear explosion, where their cooks experiment with the preparation of plants and animals for consumption. There is joy (in the sensual appreciation of certain foods), as well as pain (tasting hot peppers), and unintended consequences (strange behaviour due to a fermented drink). And then there is a playful way of explaining 'scientific gastronomy' in Massimo Mongai's "Chi ha veramente inventato il tonkatsu? E gli spaghetti?". This story is concerned with culinary traditions and their original sources.

The volume closes with Mongai's "Postfazione: In Cauda Venenum Ovvero: Perché Le Donne Non Leggono E Non Scrivono Fantascienza?" This afterword

has nothing, in truth, to do with food in science fiction, but it contains the author's reaction to the fact that only 23% of the contributors to the volume are women. That women, in general, do not read science fiction, states Mongai, seems to be borne out of the Italian statistics of readers (ISTAT 2000), and he cites this as one of many other reasons why, in his opinion, women do not generally write science fiction. It is clear that the topic is of broad and current interest, but it does not furnish novel interpretations about food and science fiction.

It must be said that the depth of the stories goes well beyond thematic clusters and for this reason the book is a welcome addition to the speculative fiction's contribution to the field of nutrition. From this perspective, the collection is of interest to those academic and practical fields which deal with the problem of world hunger, the ethical and scientific considerations of eating, but above all, the definition of what makes us human.

In conclusion, the title of the collection is catchy, to be sure, and an obvious spoof on Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (a parodic use also appears in Josh Toth's "Do Androids Eat Electric

Sheep?: Egotism, Empathy, and the Ethics of Eating in the Work of Philip K. Dick", *Literature Interpretation Theory*, 24: 65-85, 2013). In this way, the idea of androids and electric spaghetti puts the reader on a mistaken interpretive path: no short story deals with androids, and there is no mention of electric spaghetti. Instead, the stories deal with all-too-human societies variously developed in not-so-distant as well as very far futures, and food is given as a clue to understanding the workings of these societies.

However, the collection has the merit of focusing, in one place, science fiction narration on the topic of food. It is interesting to note that "food" as a thematic item does not appear in Neil Barron's *Anatomy of Wonder. A Critical Guide to Science Fiction* (Fifth Edition, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2004) and the entry "Food and drink" written by David Langford encompasses 2 pages in *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of Science Fiction* (edited by Gary Westfahl, Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2003). Clearly, much scholarly work remains to be done in this area. And since gastronomy is a comparatively new academic field, speculative fiction and food may yet grow to be a strand in this endeavour.



### Call for Papers—Conference

**Title:** 2016-2017 Le Guin Science Fiction Fellowship.

**Deadline:** 2 September, 2016.

**Contact:** [csws@uoregon.edu](mailto:csws@uoregon.edu).

The Le Guin Feminist Science Fiction Research Fellowships support travel for the purpose of conducting research using the papers of feminist science fiction authors housed in the UO Libraries Special Collections and University Archives. For more information on these collections, which include the papers of Ursula K. Le Guin, visit: <http://library.uoregon.edu/node/3524>.

Applications for short-term research fellowships will be accepted from undergraduates, master's and doctoral students, postdoctoral scholars, and college and university faculty at every rank, as well as independent scholars working in feminist science fiction.

Up to \$3,000 in fellowship support will be awarded for use within one year of award notification.

For complete information and application requirements, visit: <http://csws.uoregon.edu/?p=20663>.

**Submission:** submit applications to: [csws@uoregon.edu](mailto:csws@uoregon.edu).

The Le Guin Feminist Science Fiction Fellowships are sponsored by the University of Oregon's Center for the Study of Women in Society, the Robert D. Clark Honors College, and the UO Libraries Special Collections and University Archives.

**Title:** Popular Culture/American Culture Association National Conference, Pulp Studies Area.

**Deadline:** 1 October, 2016.

**Conference Date:** April 12-15, 2017, San Diego, CA.

**Contact:** [j.everet@uscience.edu](mailto:j.everet@uscience.edu); [jeffrey\\_shanks@nps.gov](mailto:jeffrey_shanks@nps.gov).

Pulp magazines were a series of mostly English-language, predominantly American, magazines printed on rough pulp paper. They were often illustrated with highly stylized, full-page cover art and numerous line art illustrations of the fictional content. They were sold for modest sums, and were targeted

at (sometimes specialized) readerships of popular literature, such as western and adventure, detective, fantastic (including the evolving genres of science fiction, fantasy, and horror), romance and sports fiction. The first pulp *Argosy*, began life as the children's magazine *The Golden Argosy*, dated Dec 2, 1882 and the last of the "original" pulps was *Ranch Romances and Adventures*, Nov. 1971.

The Pulp Studies area exists to support the academic study of pulp writers, editors, readers, and culture. It seeks to invigorate research by bringing together scholars from diverse areas including romance, western, science fiction, fantasy, horror, adventure, detective, and more. Finally, the Pulp Studies area seeks to promote the preservation of the pulps through communication with libraries, museums, and collectors.

With this in mind, we are calling for papers and panels that discuss the pulps and their legacy. Suggested authors and topics:

- Magazines: *Amazing Stories*, *Weird Tales*, *Wonder Stories*, *Fight Stories*, *All-Story*, *Argosy*, *Thrilling Wonder Stories*, *Spicy Detective*, *Ranch Romances and Adventures*, *Oriental Stories/Magic Carpet Magazine*, *Love Story*, *Flying Aces*, *Black Mask*, and *Unknown*, to name a few.
- Editors and Owners: Street and Smith (*Astounding*), Munsey (*Argosy*), Farnsworth Wright (*Weird Tales*), Hugo Gernsback (*Amazing Stories*), Mencken and Nathan (*Black Mask*), John Campbell (*Astounding*).
- Influential Writers: Robert Bloch, H.P. Lovecraft, A. E. Merritt, Robert E. Howard, C. L. Moore, Fritz Leiber, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Donald Wandrei, Clark Ashton Smith, and Henry Kuttner.
- Influences on Pulp Writers: H. G. Wells, H. Rider Haggard, Arthur Conan Doyle, Jack London, and Edgar Rice Burroughs were all influences, along with literary and philosophical figures such as Bram Stoker, Mary Shelley, Friedrich Nietzsche, Edgar Allen Poe, and Herbert Spencer.
- Popular Characters: Conan of Cimmeria; Bulldog Drummond; Doc Savage; Solomon Kane; Buck Rogers; The Domino Lady; Jiril of Jiory; Zorro; El Borak; The Shadow; The Spider; Nick Carter; The Avenger; and Captain Future, among others. Also character types: the femme fatale, the he-man, the trickster, racism and villainy (such as Charles

Middleton's Ming the Merciless), and more.

- Artists: Popular cover artists including Margaret Brundage (*Weird Tales*), Frank R. Paul (*Amazing Stories*), Virgil Finlay (*Weird Tales*), and Edd Cartier (*The Shadow*, *Astounding*).
- Theme and Styles: Masculinity, femininity, and sex as related to the heroic in the pulps; the savage as hero, the woman as hero, the trickster as hero, etc.
- Film, Television and Graphic Arts: Pulps in film, television, comics, graphic novels and other forms are especially encouraged.
- Cyberculture: Cyberpulp such as *Beneath Ceaseless Skies* and pulp-influenced games such as the *Age of Conan* MMORPG or the *Call of Cthulhu* role-playing game.
- International Pulp Fiction: during the interwar period and after WWII American-style pulp fiction inspired native pulp traditions in Australia, Britain, and continental Europe. Submissions covering pulp magazines, paperbacks, and writers in languages other than English are especially encouraged.

These are but suggestions for potential panels and presentations. Proposals on other topics are welcome.

For general information on the Pulp Studies area, please visit our website: <http://pulpstudies.weebly.com/>

**Submission:** follow the instructions appearing on this web page: <http://pcaaca.org/national-conference/proposing-a-presentation-at-the-conference/>.

If you have any questions, please contact the Pulp Studies area coordinators:

Justin Everett, University of the Sciences, [j.everet@usciences.edu](mailto:j.everet@usciences.edu).

Jeffrey Shanks, Southeast Archaeological Center, [jeffrey\\_shanks@nps.gov](mailto:jeffrey_shanks@nps.gov).

**Title:** ICFA Panel: "Fantastic Epics."

**Deadline:** October 31, 2016.

**Contact:** for full information, go to Le Guin Funding Details: To submit a proposal, go to <http://www.fantastic-arts.org/icfa-submissions/>.

Please join us for ICFA 38, March 22-26, 2017, when our theme will be "Fantastic Epics." We welcome pa-

pers on the work of: Guest of Honor Steven Erikson (World Fantasy and Locus Award nominee), Guest of Honor N.K. Jemisin (Hugo, Nebula, and World Fantasy Award nominee, Locus Award winner), and Guest Scholar Edward James (Pilgrim, Hugo, British Science Fiction Association, and Eaton Award winner). The hero(ine)'s tale is as old as storytelling itself. We trace our way from Gilgamesh to current practitioners of the art through routes that lead to – and beyond – other kingdoms, including those of Malazan and the cities of Gujaareh, Sky, and Shadow. Papers may tread the paths of Thomas the Unbeliever, Bren Cameron, Sundiata Keita, and Boudica, or follow a dark road through Gondor, Camelot, or any valley of shadow. We can find the Epic in the hall of Heorot and in the rooms of Schaherazade. Examinations of modern epics might include the American west, the Marvel Universe, or the world of Miyazaki. A journey, a quest, an awakening – all these and more are part of Fantastic Epics. We also welcome proposals for individual papers and for academic sessions and panels on any aspect of the fantastic in any media.

**Submission:** the deadline for proposals is October 31, 2016. We encourage work from institutionally affiliated scholars, independent scholars, international scholars who work in languages other than English, and graduate students.

More information forthcoming at [www.iafa.org](http://www.iafa.org).

For more information on the IAFA and its conference, the ICFA, see <http://www.fantastic-arts.org/>. To submit a proposal, go to <http://www.fantastic-arts.org/icfa-submissions/>.

To contact the Division Heads for help with submissions, go to <http://www.fantastic-arts.org/annual-conference/division-heads>.

## Call for Papers—Articles

**Title:** Jamie Bishop Memorial Award.

**Manuscript Deadline:** 1 September, 2016.

**Contact:** Amy J. Ransom: [ranso1aj@cmich.edu](mailto:ranso1aj@cmich.edu).

The International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts Announces its 10th annual Jamie Bishop Memorial Award for a critical essay on the fantastic written in a language other than English. The IAFA de-

defines the fantastic to include science fiction, folklore, and related genres in literature, drama, film, art and graphic design, and related disciplines. For more information on the award and on past winners, please see <http://www.fantastic-arts.org/awards/jamie-bishop-memorial-award/> (please note the updated submission criteria, below).

**Submission:** essays should be of high scholarly quality, as if for publication in an academic journal.

- We consider essays from 3,000-10,000 words in length (including notes and bibliography).
- Essays may be unpublished scholarship submitted by the author, or already published work nominated either by the author or another scholar (in which case the author's permission should be obtained before submission).
- Essays must have been written and (when applicable) published in the original language within the last three years prior to submission.
- An abstract in English must accompany all submissions; an English translation of the title of the essay should also be included.
- Only one essay per person may be submitted each year.
- Submissions must be made electronically in Word format.

**Prize:** \$250 U.S. and one year's free membership in the IAFA to be awarded at the annual International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts held each March. Winning essays may be posted on the IAFA website in the original language and/or considered for publication in the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* (<http://www.fantastic-arts.org/jfa/>) should they be translated into English.

**Title:** Call for Submissions for an anthology volume: *Fantastic Fan Cultures and the Sacred*.

**Proposal Deadline:** 2nd September, 2016.

**Contact:** John Morehead ([johnwmorehead@msn.com](mailto:johnwmorehead@msn.com)).

The ways in which people pursue religion has changed in America and the West. Traditional, institutional religions are in decline, and even among those who claim "None" as their identity, an individualized spirituality of seeking is growing in popular-

ity. As a part of this quest, the sacred often comes in seemingly nonreligious forms. Gary Laderman, a scholar of religion asks in light of this situation:

"So what if the sacred is not only, or even primarily, tied to theology or religious identity labels like more, less, and not religious? We might see how religious practices and commitments emanate from unlikely sources today..."

One of those unlike sources of the sacred is fantastic fan cultures. Science fiction, fantasy, and horror genres are incredibly popular and have become multimillion dollar facets of the entertainment industry. But there is more here than meets the eye. Fantastic fandom has also spawned subcultures that include sacred aspects.

*Fantastic Fan Cultures and the Sacred* will be an edited anthology that explores the sacred aspects of fantastic fandom. Its content will be academically informed, but accessible to average readers so that it appeals not only to scholars wanting to learn more about pop culture and religion, but also to average fans who will expand their understanding of their fandom and culture.

Possible topics for this volume include but are not limited to:

- Buffyverse fandom and other genre "cult fandoms"
- Collecting and sacred relics – Of special interest is Guillermo del Toro's and *Bleak House*, and his connection of this to his unique form of primal spirituality: "I'm not a collector. I'm a religious man."
- Convention participation as religious pilgrimage
- Cosplay as immersion in sacred narrative and identity
- Fantasy and science fiction conventions as Transformational Festivals (akin to Burning Man Festival)
- Horror conventions as worlds "of gods and monsters"
- Pop culture phrases as sacred wisdom teachings
- Science fiction, fantasy, and horror as sacred narratives and mythology
- Star Trek fandom as secular civil religion/spirituality

**Submission:** this volume will be edited by John

Morehead. Morehead is the proprietor of [Theofantastique.com](http://Theofantastique.com). He has contributed to various online and print publications including Cinefantastique Online, the *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts*, and *Extrapolation*. In addition, he is the co-editor of *The Undead and Theology*, *Joss Whedon and Religion*, and the editor of *The Supernatural Cinema of Guillermo del Toro*.

Those interested in being a part of this volume are encouraged to send a 300 word proposal and your curriculum vitae by email. Both should be in MS-Word or PDF format. The deadline for submission is September 2, 2016. Materials and questions should be sent to John Morehead at [johnwmorehead@msn.com](mailto:johnwmorehead@msn.com).

**Title:** *Fantastika Journal*.

**Manuscript Deadline:** 15th September, 2016.

**Contact:** [editors@fantastikajournal.com](mailto:editors@fantastikajournal.com); <http://www.fantastikajournal.com/1st-special-edition-issue.html>.

“Fantastika” – a term appropriated from a range of Slavonic languages by John Clute – embraces the genres of fantasy, science fiction, and horror, but can also include alternative histories, gothic, steampunk, young adult dystopian fiction, or any other radically imaginative narrative space. The goal of *Fantastika Journal* is to bring together academics and researchers who share an interest in this diverse range of fields with the aim of opening up new dialogues, productive controversies and collaborations. We invite discussion of all mediums and disciplines which concern the *Fantastika* genres.

The first issue aims to explore and evaluate current research into Fantastika. As well as cataloguing and challenging established critical stances and recent developments, we are looking for approaches which embrace the self-reflexivity latent in the study of speculative and fantastical texts. It is our position that to ask questions about and within Fantastika studies is also to ask ‘what is Fantastika?’ – that to read or identify Fantastika as Fantastika is to probe and strengthen our own hermeneutics. Research topics and questions which relate to our theme include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parameters: the relation between genres and fields. What constitutes genre, and what is its

relation to Fantastika? How significant are ideas of genre to Fantastika?

- Critical categories and taxonomies. What is the value of constructing new terminologies to encapsulate given affects, fields, intersections or modes? What is the relative worth of an umbrella term or category as opposed to a discrete one, and vice-versa?
- Fantastika and history. What is the relationship between attempts at definition, hermeneutics or critical reading and the fluctuating field of history? How can historical contexts and studies constitute a lens through which new critical methods and perspectives become available?
- Liminality and ‘ownership’. Why do distinct fields of study attempt to incorporate or ‘possess’ certain texts, authors and subgenres under their banners? What is the significance of fields of study which could be considered modes rather than genres? How does reading a text within or against a generic or modal definition change, enhance, or determine the reading? What is the relationship between the umbrella term and the specific texts that might be studied under it, especially when considering close textual analysis?
- Developments and trajectories. What is (or could be) the meaning of Fantastika – both as a set of literatures and discourses and as a collective categorisation – in academia today? What are the most important trends and developments in the study of Fantastika and how do they relate to the shifting position of academia in the 21st century?

**Submission:** we invite articles of 5,000 - 7,000 length. Please submit articles in doc or docx format to [editors@fantastikajournal.com](mailto:editors@fantastikajournal.com) by **15th September 2016** along with a 300 word abstract and short bionote in separate documents. Articles should be in accordance the MLA Style Manual. Submissions should be made under the subject line “First Special Edition.” Please note that all articles published with Fantastika Journal will undergo peer-review before publication.

**Title:** Bridging the Solitudes: Essays on Canadian Science Fiction, Fantasy & Horror.

**Manuscript Deadline:** 1st January, 2017.



**Contact:** [ranso1aj@cmich.edu](mailto:ranso1aj@cmich.edu) AND [dgrace2@uwo.ca](mailto:dgrace2@uwo.ca).

This call is to solicit chapter proposals for an edited volume of scholarly essays on Canadian science-fiction, fantasy, and horror. A book proposal, including accepted abstracts, will be submitted to the Palgrave/Macmillan series on Studies in Global Science Fiction (series editors Anindita Banerjee, Rachel Haywood Ferreira, and Mark Bould).

Canadian science-fiction, fantasy, and horror literatures imagine the nation—indeed, the world—as *other*, *different* than it is in the here and now. One of the recurring dissatisfactions about Canada concerns two central metaphors that have been used to define the Canadian nation: the lack of communication between French- and English-Canadians as constructing *The Two Solitudes* described in Hugh MacLennan's 1945 novel, and the problem of envisioning a multicultural Canada as a mosaic. The nation's genre literatures in French and English have engaged with these issues from their very beginnings in the nineteenth-century through the present day. Indeed, when Judith Merrill decided to edit a volume of Canadian speculative fiction (published in English but including French-Canadian writers), she founded the *Tesseracts* series of anthologies, whose title references not only the four-dimensional image of a cube, but which also includes the Greek *tessera*, an individual tile in a mosaic.

Since the publication of that foundational text, Canadian speculative fiction in both French and English has expanded exponentially. From its controversial relationship with the nation's best-known author (in any genre), Margaret Atwood, to outspoken proponents like Robert J. Sawyer, to fierce defenders of the French presence in Canada like Élisabeth Vonarburg, to the rise of Québec's equivalent of Stephen King, Patrick Senécal, in its maturity Canadian speculative fiction spans the entire gamut of genres and subgenres, literary styles, and so on. Although divisions certainly exist, writers and scholars of Canadian speculative fiction have frequently worked to bridge the two solitudes in their works and activities, publishing translations, attending each other's cons, and so on. This task has become increasingly complex as the genre has also expanded its definitions and evolved to embrace more fully the national policy of multiculturalism and the global realities of cultural exchange. Thus, the success of writers like

Nalo Hopkinson, Hiromi Goto, Larisa Lai, Stanley Péan, and others hailing from a wide array of cultural communities who practice forms of genre writing that may sometimes appear alien themselves to old guard readers have challenged and expanded the idea of the fantastic, making the term "speculative" fiction more appropriate than ever. Furthermore, a growing number of First Nations writers, filmmakers, graphic artists, and game designers like Eden Robinson, Tomson Highway, and Jeff Barnaby have put Indigenous Futurisms on the generic map.

The editors seek proposals for chapters on an array of topics linked to the production of sf, fantasy, and horror in an array of media by Canadian writers, filmmakers, and artists. Although essays must be in English, we are actively seeking contributions that address the work of French-language, First Nations, and diasporic writers. Ideally, chapters will somehow address the metaphor of the bridge, connecting with the utopian desire to reach out to the other *or* conversely, the dystopian burning of such bridges, understanding that Thomas More's original utopia was "perfect" because isolated from corrupting influences, and, of course, in the end, was far from perfect. Chapters may address the work of a single author or engage a problem found in the work of several writers; single-text studies will need to be particularly rigorous or open out onto wider applications in order to be considered.

Suggested topics include, but are not limited to:

- Themes related to the volume concept, such as:
  - Bridge as metaphor/motif in Can SF & F
  - Trans/Canada: the queering of Canadian SF
  - Border crossings, in texts/by authors (US-born writers who have become Canadian)
  - Regionalisms beyond Quebec/TROC divide
- Significant authors, such as:
  - Margaret Atwood (proposals must address the volume's aims directly)
  - Robert J. Sawyer; Robert Charles Wilson; Peter Watts
  - William Gibson (particularly the Bridge trilogy; proposals must address the "Canadian")
  - Candace Jane Dorsey; Nalo Hopkinson; Eden Robinson
  - Élisabeth Vonarburg; Esther Rochon; Sylvie Bérard
  - Jean-Louis Trudel; Yves Meynard; Joël

Champetier

- Patrick Senécal; Éric Gauthier; Stanley Péan
- Genres or theory specific to Canada, including:
  - Genre hybridity/ mash-up
  - What is Canadian speculative fiction?
  - Transmedia texts
  - Canadian comics and the fantastic

**Submission:** submit chapter proposals by January 1, 2017.

- 500 Word abstract
- Working bibliography
- Brief author bio

Completed chapters for accepted manuscripts due by September 1, 2017.

**Title:** *Science Fiction Film and Television Special Issue on Women and Media SF.*

**Manuscript Deadline:** 15th March 2017.

**Contact:** Mark Bould ([mark.bould@gmail.com](mailto:mark.bould@gmail.com)), Gerry Canavan ([gerrycanavan@gmail.com](mailto:gerrycanavan@gmail.com)) and Sherryl Vint ([sherryl.vint@gmail.com](mailto:sherryl.vint@gmail.com)).

*Science Fiction Film and Television* is seeking articles for a special issue on Women & Science Fiction Media, intended to mark the 200th year anniversary of the publication of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Although sf was once stereotyped as a male genre, more recently women's contributions as authors, fans, editors, and more have become more widely acknowledged. Central to this new understanding of women's contributions to sf has been the realization that women have always been a part of the genre, resisting another stereotype that links women's emergence in the field to the feminist fiction of the 1960s and 1970s. In recognition of the bicentenary of the publication of *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley, arguably the first sf novel, we seek essays that recognize, interrogate, respond to and celebrate women's contributions to media sf. We are interested in reviewing any work that explores this topic, but we are particularly interested in contributions on the following topics:

- Female directors of sf film and television.
- Female sf showrunners.

- Female scriptwriters in sf.
- Gender and Mary Shelley's legacy in sf's imagination of created beings.
- *Frankenstein* remakes, adaptations, reboots and reinventions.
- Gender and casting, and character arc in media sf
- Gender in sf fandom and criticism.

**Submission:** articles should be 7000 to 9000 words in length, including footnotes and bibliography. Submissions (in word or rtf, following MLA style) should be made via our website at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/lup-sfftv>.

**Title:** *Brumal: Revista de Investigación sobre lo Fantástico/ Brumal: Research Journal on the Fantastic.*

**Proposal Deadline:** Ongoing.

**Contact:** <http://revistes.uab.cat/brumal/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>.

Monographic Section: "The fantastic in comics" (coord. José Manuel Trabado).

Miscellaneous Section: this Miscellaneous section is open to any type of article on any of the diverse artistic manifestations of the fantastic (narrative, theater, film, comics, painting, photography, video games), whether theoretical, critical, historical or comparative in nature, concerning the fantastic in any language or from any country, from the nineteenth century to the present.

**Submission:** scholars who wish to contribute to either of these two sections should send us their articles registering as authors on our web page. The Guidelines for Submissions may be found on the Submissions section of the web page.

**Title:** *World Science Fiction Studies.*

**Manuscript Deadline:** Ongoing.

**Contact:** Dr Laurel Plapp, Senior Commissioning Editor: [L.PLAPP@peterlang.com](mailto:L.PLAPP@peterlang.com).

The book series *World Science Fiction Studies* understands science fiction to be a global phenomenon and explores the various manifestations of the genre in cultures around the world. It recognizes the importance of Anglo-American contributions to the field but promotes the critical study of science fiction in other national traditions, particularly Ger-

man-speaking. It also supports the investigation of transnational discourses that have shaped the science fiction tradition since its inception. The scope of the series is not limited to one particular medium and encourages study of the genre in both print and digital forms (e.g. literature, film, television, trans-medial). Theoretical approaches (e.g. post-human, gender, genre theory) and genre studies (e.g. film shorts, transgenre such as science fiction comedy) with a focus beyond the Anglo-American tradition are also welcome.

**Submission:** Proposals for monographs and edited collections in either English or German are invited. For more information, please contact Dr Laurel Plapp, Senior Commissioning Editor, Peter Lang Ltd, 52 St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LU, UK. Email: [L.PLAPP@peterlang.com](mailto:L.PLAPP@peterlang.com). Tel: +44 (0) 1865 514160.

**Title:** Museum of Science Fiction Call for Submissions for New Triannual *Journal of Science Fiction*.

**Manuscript Deadline:** Ongoing.

**Contact:** Register on website: <http://publish.lib.umd.edu/scifi/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>.

The Museum of Science Fiction, the world's first comprehensive science fiction museum, will publish an academic journal of science fiction using the University of Maryland's journal management system. The first issue of the Museum's new *Journal of Science Fiction* will be launched in January of 2016 and will serve as a forum for scientists and academics from around the world to discuss science fiction, including recent trends in the genre, its influence on the modern world, and its prognostications of the future.

Greg Bear, member of Museum of Science Fiction's Board of Advisors and Hugo award-winning science fiction author said, "Science fiction as literature has real staying power and has been a huge influence on our modern world. It's only fitting that we attempt to understand the cultural and mythic roots of our need for anticipation, adventure, and imagination."

"We want readers everywhere to consider the science fiction genre they love from new angles. We want them to ask questions and to have fun doing so," said Monica Louzon, managing editor of the Museum's new *Journal of Science Fiction*. "We're encouraging anyone who considers themselves a sci-

ence fiction scholar to send us their original articles, essays or book reviews for our first issue."

The *Journal of Science Fiction* will be published online and freely accessible to everyone -- no subscription or submission fees are required. The Museum's *Journal of Science Fiction* welcomes original work from writers around the world, with an emphasis on the interdisciplinary and innovative aspects of science fiction. Issues will be published three times a year and each will feature between eight and twelve peer-reviewed academic articles as well as several book reviews and essays.

**Submission:** submission information for the *Journal of Science Fiction* can be found on the Journal's homepage at the University of Maryland: <http://publish.lib.umd.edu/scifi/index>.

Submissions for the *Journal of Science Fiction* can be sent to: <http://publish.lib.umd.edu/scifi/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>.

Any Journal-related questions can be emailed to Monica Louzon, Managing Editor: [journal@museumof-sciencefiction.org](mailto:journal@museumof-sciencefiction.org).

More information about other activities are available on the Museum's website: [www.museumof-sciencefiction.org](http://www.museumof-sciencefiction.org).

**About the Museum of Science Fiction:** the non-profit Museum of Science Fiction will be the world's first comprehensive science fiction museum, covering the history of the genre across the arts and providing a narrative on its relationship to the real world. The Museum will show how science fiction continually inspires individuals, influences cultures, and impacts societies. Also serving as an educational catalyst to expand interest in the science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) areas. The Museum uses tools such as mobile applications and wifi-enabled display objects to educate and entertain. For a full press packet on the Museum of Science Fiction's vision and other information, please visit: [www.museumofsciencefiction.org/presspacket](http://www.museumofsciencefiction.org/presspacket).

**Title:** *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural*.

**Manuscript Deadline:** Ongoing.

**Contact:** Debbie Felton: [felton@classics.umass.edu](mailto:felton@classics.umass.edu); <http://www.editorialmanager.com/preternature/>.

The journal *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural* is currently seeking original submissions. *Preternature* is indexed by both JSTOR and Project MUSE.

*Preternature* provides an interdisciplinary, inclusive forum for the study of topics that stand in the liminal space between the known world and the inexplicable. The journal embraces a broad and dynamic definition of the preternatural that encompasses the weird and uncanny—magic, witchcraft, spiritualism, occultism, esotericism, demonology, monstrosity, and more, recognizing that the areas of magic, religion, and science are fluid and that their intersections should continue to be explored, contextualized, and challenged.

A rigorously peer-reviewed journal, *Preternature* welcomes submissions of original research in English from any academic discipline and theoretical approach relating to the role and significance of the preternatural. The journal publishes scholarly articles, notes, and reviews covering all time periods

and cultures. Additionally, *Preternature* is pleased to consider original editions or translations of relevant texts from contemporary or ancient languages that have not yet appeared in scholarly edition or been made available in English.

**Submission:** contributions should be roughly 8,000–12,000 words (with the possibility of longer submissions in exceptional cases), including all documentation and critical apparatus. If accepted for publication, manuscripts will be required to adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition (style 1, employing footnotes).

To submit a manuscript to the editorial office, please visit <http://www.editorialmanager.com/preternature/> and create an author profile. The online system will guide you through the steps to upload your article for submission to the editorial office.

Inquiries may be directed to the Editor, Debbie Felton, at: [felton@classics.umass.edu](mailto:felton@classics.umass.edu).



# Science Fiction Research Association

[www.sfra.org](http://www.sfra.org)

The Science Fiction Research Association is the oldest professional organization for the study of science fiction and fantasy literature and film. Founded in 1970, the SFRA was organized to improve classroom teaching; to encourage and assist scholarship; and to evaluate and publicize new books and magazines dealing with fantastic literature and film, teaching methods and materials, and allied media performances. Among the membership are people from many countries—students, teachers, professors, librarians, futurologists, readers, authors, booksellers, editors, publishers, archivists, and scholars in many disciplines. Academic affiliation is not a requirement for membership. Visit the SFRA Website at [www.sfra.org](http://www.sfra.org). For a membership application, contact the SFRA Treasurer or see the Website.

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## **SFRA Standard Membership Benefits**

### *SFRA Review*

Four issues per year. This newsletter/journal surveys the field of science fiction scholarship, including extensive reviews of fiction and nonfiction books and media, review articles, and listings of new and forthcoming books. The *Review* also posts news about SFRA internal affairs, calls for papers, and updates on works in progress.

### *SFRA Annual Directory*

One issue per year. Members' names, contact information, and areas of interest.

### *SFRA Listserv*

Ongoing. The SFRA listserv allows members to discuss topics and news of interest to the SF community, and to query the collective knowledge of the membership. To join the listserv or obtain further information, visit [wiz.cath.vt.edu/mailman/listinfo/sfra-l](http://wiz.cath.vt.edu/mailman/listinfo/sfra-l).

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Three issues per year. The oldest scholarly journal in the field, with critical, historical, and bibliographical articles, book reviews, letters, occasional special topic issues, and annual index.

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### *Science Fiction Film and Television*

Three issues per year. Critical works and reviews. Add to dues: \$59 (e-issue only); \$73 (airmail).

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Four issues per year. Scholarly journal, with critical and bibliographical articles and reviews. Add to dues: \$40/1 year (US); \$50/1 year (international); \$100/3 years.

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Critical and creative works. Add to dues: \$50 (US); \$95 (US institutional); \$60 (international); \$105 (international institutional).

